



# **Bad Boy Gone Good - Billy Hargrove ST2 & ST3 Mixed Fanfic by MorganaTwist**

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**Summary:** This story is a WIP Billy & Female OC romance fic in the ST universe without the threat of the Mindflayer, Upside Down, or Demodogs. "The Party" kids and Scoops Troop will be in this. El is simply an adopted daughter to Chief Hopper. Max, Neil, Susan, Billy, Tommy, Carol, Tina, Nancy, Johnathan & all students are the same as they were in the show. Extra OCs added for padding.

# **1. Mandy & The New Kid On The Block**

## **BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

**UPDATE - November 7th 2019:**

Okay so I had a great Halloween! Hope everyone else did. Back to writing! :D Sorry for making everyone wait. Updates coming today! ;)

Sorry it's stalled everyone I know it's a pain to have to wait for the next chapter. Don't worry I won't leave this unfinished. Just need time to figure out where I'm going with this so please have patience. Rome wasn't built in a day and a fanfiction can't be rushed or finished within a week or two. :D

### **NOTE:**

The chapters are being updated and somewhat rewritten in certain areas for better flow and continuity as well as edited for mistakes. I am still proof reading as I go and catching mistakes in my grammar, punctuation, spelling, and contradictory problem passages. Give it a reread and see what you think.

If you notice something off don't be shy and PM me to let me know! Many eyes are better than two. ;)

Some of this isn't organized yet and will be changed around once completed with fully organized chapters. Please be patient. I don't write from start to finish and the muse is in control in my head for this story as I write bits and pieces here and there.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything

but my OCs and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy. Without further ado.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

**Chapter 1 - MANDY & THE NEW KID ON THE BLOCK**

**Summary:**

We are introduced to Mandy Hawkins and the Hawkins family by extention as well as their legacy and ties to the town of Hawkins, Indiana.

We get a sense of her school life, home life, family life, and social life. Also we learn a bit about her parents Rick and Katherine and her friends Nikki, Tucker, and Alex.

A mysterious boy moves in across the street from her. He's very intense and seems angry. None too pleased about moving here nor does he seem to like his family very much. On her way to school he shows off and she tries to ignore him.

Later on in her first period class, she finds out she is fated for something she was not ready for.

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**-AUGUST, 27TH, 1984-**

**FIRST DAY BACK TO HAWKINS HIGH SCHOOL**

**SENIOR YEAR IN HAWKINS, INDIANA**

Mandy overslept even through her loud buzzing alarm clock and realized she might be late for school. Even worse, today of all days was the first day back to school, adding a good measure of stress to her morning. Mandy was NEVER late and hated when things didn't go according to plan. She had always taken great pride in her attendance. Just last year as a Junior of Hawkins High she had recieved a perfect attendance award so this wasn't exactly a great way to start off the first day and semester of the new school year.

Groaning and attempting to roll over in her bed she tried to hit the off button on her alarm. What good were alarms if she could sleep right through them, anyway? It was very unlike her to be this drowsy to the point of being lazy but she chalked it up to being too used to the freedom of Summer and school being out for the past few months. The last vestiges of Summer were still hanging on a thin thread and it was going to be a slow grind back into the routine of losing some of her freedoms in exchange for thinking about her future.

Rubbing her eyes and murmuring while in a half dazed sleep state, somewhere between dreaming and waking, she listened to the annoying sounds of the alarm clock buzzing repetitiously in her ear like a giant angry wasp. When dreaming, her mind had connected the sound to her subconscious putting images into it of said giant wasp attacking her as she fought to slap it away. Once she realized it was her alarm and not an actual killer wasp, she groaned loudly and wondered just how many times had she hit the snooze button in her fever dream without realizing it as she tried in vain to stay asleep.

*Ugggh! Shut! Up!* Mandy thought while lazily throwing one of her stuffed animals at it and missing it entirely.

Grumbling, she bolted upright and swatted it with her hand hard in an attempt to lazily attack the off button. She wound up taking a small tumble out of bed in the process. Giving a small shout of surprise on her way down she had somehow managed to get tangled up in the sheets while tossing and turning through the night without realizing it. She fell to the floor with a soft thudding noise.

Her mother's voice, Katherine Hawkins, could instantly be heard shouting from below in the kitchen. With all the noise upstairs, she had more than likely heard the muffled thump of Mandy's body softly hitting carpet all the way from where she was standing on the first floor of the house.

"Honey? Are you alright? What was that noise?" Her voice was full of concern as she shouted up at her.

Slightly wounded and feeling a bruise coming on, Mandy rubbed her sore hip and bottom where her body made contact with the hard

carpet. She tried untangling herself from her bedding helplessly so she could get up and start getting ready for school. Cursing at herself under her breath softly she struggled to get free of the sheets finally managing to right herself to stand.

Honestly, she made herself so frustrated sometimes over how clumsy she could be. Sometimes? ALL the time was more like it and usually whenever someone was watching which would make them bust up laughing at her. If her sleeping in carelessly didn't make her late then being unsteady on her feet and a bit of a klutz would.

"I'm fine, mom! Just a little fall. I'm okay, really!"

Mandy answered hollaring back at her while quickly tearing off her night gown and her undergarments leaving them strewn about her room and running into her private bathroom. She had to hurry with her shower and brush her teeth as the time was slipping on mercilessly by the second.

"You're going to be late on your first day! It's seven fifteen in the morning already! You know it takes you a half an hour or so to walk! You should really just let me give you a ride!"

*Thanks, mom. I didn't know that!* She thought frowning at the obvious.

"No, I got this! Really!" She shouted back hurrying to switch on the light and grab her toothbrush and toothpaste from the mirror cabinet.

She prepped her toothbrush while her mothers voice shouted up a muddled warning at her from downstairs. She was most likely fixing breakfast for everyone and getting ready to leave with Calvin, her little brother, to take him to school.

Calvin was lucky. He was six years old. He didn't have to worry about perfect attendance and truancy or messing up anything in school really. All his work was done in class and he never had to worry about getting there on time because he got rides to school everyday. He never had to worry about how he would get home either because he would always get picked up by their mother's sister, Aunt Lilah, who would drop him off in the afternoon for Mandy to watch him until their parents could get home. Her dad was usually the first to

arrive as he didn't work late hours like her mother did at the hospital. Mandy was usually home right after school on the weekdays so she was always available to sit an hour after Calvin got out of preschool.

Unlike most older sisters who found their younger siblings annoying, Mandy loved her little brother and didn't mind watching him in the slightest. He also liked when she did because she was way more lenient than her parents and other sitters were. In exchange for him not saying anything if she ever did decide to have friends over while watching him he would keep his silence. This was in part because she would let him eat a little junk food and stay up somewhat later than he should as the payoff. It was like their own private little secret between the two of them. If she didn't have her friends come over Mandy would often enjoy the peace and quiet while reading one of her books.

Her parents gave her the weekend to run around with her friends or do her own thing since they luckily had weekends off from work. They had it all worked out because Mandy never really liked to go out much anyway, especially on school nights. She took her school work very seriously. Should a weekend ever arrive in which they needed her to sit for Calvin on a Saturday or Sunday they would check with her plans first. What plans? Mandy was content to read, study, and relax at home constantly. The only time she left was usually just to head to the local library or used book stores downtown.

She wasn't wild and rambunctious like her peers or her close friends because she simply wasn't interested in the things most common teenagers her age were. Her parents were comfortable with this although they did wish she would go out more and have fun like a normal teenager. It was a topic that was discussed from time to time. Her parents would actually sometimes bother her to go out and hang with her friends and to go be young and have fun.

Often and unlike most parents they would even encourage her to go get at least a little bit spontaneous and try going to a party for once. They just didn't want her to get too crazy with it so she wouldn't wind up with drunk drivers or ending up with a record which could ruin her bright future plans for college.

Her were understanding they just didn't want her alone with boys, well mostly that was her father's issue, or drinking and smoking. They trusted her not to and to be smart about it and yet her dad was very protective of her when it came to guys and dating. She didn't want all of that anyway but she could admit that from time to time she was a little curious about going to parties and maybe trying a drink or two. She could easily enough avoid the boys and dating part however. She just wasn't into that as it wasn't her scene at all. Mandy smiled at her fortune of having a loving family and good friends who cared about her.

Despite not being the typical teenager, Nikki, Tucker, and Alex would sometimes manage to talk her into going to the arcade, a movie, or to hangout around town aimlessly with them. Each time Mandy would drag them into a bookstore they would groan but go with her while she checked out the hidden treasures she could find there. Her favorites were usually fairytales, fantasy, and love stories but sometimes she would read horror or sci fi to round everything out.

If that wasn't the plan for the day then they would go hangout with Nancy at the Wheeler's residence, the agreed upon hangout spot besides Steve Harrington's place who was Nancy's boyfriend. The bonus for Mandy was to hangout with Mike Wheeler's group of friends known as "The Party" around Hawkins Middle School, proud members of the Hawkins AV Club with their teacher Mr Clark as the President.

Always a democracy, they still considered Mike Wheeler as the general leader. The other kids it consisted of were Dustin Henderson, Lucas Sinclair, and Will Byers. The four muskateers of board gaming and nerdy goodness. She loved their awesome toys and talking Star Wars or comics with them.

They had recently added a young girl named El into their party who seemed to be Mike's love interest although he wouldn't talk about it. She had only met her a few times when there. El was kind and soft spoken almost seeming to have trouble speaking English very well, her sentences somewhat broken which made Mandy curious. Mike told her that Chief Jim Hopper had adopted her not too long ago because she had no parents and came from a very bad place and situation. Mandy frowned at this feeling for her deeply.



Nancy would poke fun at their nerd hangout and gathering in the basement but Mandy often offered to play a little bit of D & D with them from time to time. They even helped her make her own character and figurine. Will Byers helped her draw artwork of her and Dustin helped her write a backstory for times when they would allow her in on the campaign. As long as it didn't disrupt the flow of their character's main quests and leveling, of course.

The Party liked Mandy even if she wasn't an official member and had been their babysitter a few times in the past. They trusted her and found her shy nerdiness matched well with their own so it was a comfortably friendship despite their age gap.

Nancy and Nikki usually gave her up for lost and would run off to discuss boys and other girly things in her upstairs bedroom until Mandy was ready to say goodbye to The Party. She would then rejoin her girl friends for the rest of the visit not wanting to leave anyone out.

It was rare of Mandy to visit her friend's houses but Nikki had a way of talking her into it from time to time. At the Wheeler's place she didn't mind being there too much. She loved the boys and seeing what kind of crazy stuff they were up to and would sometimes just sit in on their games to watch with their permission and joke with them.

Mandy usually avoided socializing outside of school or at school brand functions like dances and events because she never quite knew how to dress up for going places. She was mostly a loner who liked spending time to herself. She was cursed to be a very shy for a girl her age which her friends constantly tried to help her overcome, bless their naive little socialite hearts.

She also was very fond of swimming and absolutely loved being in the water despite swimsuits being rather revealing on her. It often resulted in her being too nervous to wear one in front of people so she often put a long shirt over it to cover parts of her she didn't want people to see and sometimes even put her spandex black leggings underneath to cover as much of herself as she could. The weather was still plenty warm so swimming wouldn't be an issue until perhaps around mid September as the weather cooled for Fall. She definitely had plans to go to the community pool with her friends and have the

last bit of fun in the water she could before the cold Winter months kicked in.

Aside from swimming she loved walking everywhere like a gypsy. Every time her mother offered her a ride she refused opting to make her own way there. The walk wasn't too far from her house down a lovely country back road and she would look at the horses and nature while listening to her walkman to keep her pace. In the Fall it was breathtaking to behold all the colorful leaves blowing and falling everywhere all around her. It was Mandy's favorite season in Hawkins, Indiana.

Walking had made it easy for her to stay in shape and she was very fit because of it despite her natural thickness. Mandy ate pretty healthy for a teen. Three wholesome meals a day of decent proportions as her parents loved to cook healthy food from home not really getting takeout or fast food if they could avoid it.

Even though she was a homebody, combining her walking and swimming helped her stay toned and fit. If walking and swimming didn't do it for her she also danced in her room to her favorite tunes when she was alone with no one around to tease her or watch. She loved to dance but would never publically go somewhere to do it. She was content to do it in her room for her eyes alone, always with her blinds shut just in case.

When she didn't walk it was because sometimes Nikki or Tucker would pick her up enjoying the chance to socialize with her before getting to school. They both had cars given to them by their parents for passing their driver's education class and their driver's test. She recalled how proud they had both been when they aced the exam with the instructors passing with flying colors. Now finished with their learner's permits and able to drive on their own they no longer needed a licensed driver present with them in the car. If she did ride with them, she would often pitch in for gas out of her allowance money to them in return but they rarely ever accepted it.

Mandy had also passed her driving test and had gone from her permit to her license by driving with her mother with the family station wagon. She just didn't have her own car yet. That was something her father, Rick Hawkins, had said he would be working on for her as

soon as possible. Maybe by Christmas he had told her. Her father said he had something special in the works just for her but it would take a while to get it ready. She was excited and just couldn't wait to see what he would come up with. If anyone knew cars, it was her father, because he owned his own auto mechanic shop and worked on them daily.

She looked into her bathroom mirror finishing her teeth rinsing and spitting. Staring into her own deep green eyes she gave herself the familiar talk she had for the past three years ever since being a freshman. Mandy was tired sometimes of being a shy shut in and felt herself wanting more but she was always unable to reach for it due to being unsure of herself.

"Okay Mandy, today you're going to have a great day. Even better, you're going to have a great year. You can do this. You're going to spend MORE time with your best friends this year than you did the last three years and you're going to make it up to them. You are definitely going to get your self together and have more confidence."

She half snorted at herself for that one as she talked to her nervous wreck of a reflection but pressed on not letting even herself undermine her resolution.

"You are going to have a more exciting year than last year doing something, at least ONE thing, fun and amazing. One thing to look back on for years to come and remember for the rest of your life. Even if that means going to one of Nikki's lame parties of her choosing or maybe even dating or kissing a boy. Just say yes when she asks you to a party. Just say yes."

She sighed hunched over the sink rolling her bright emerald eyes at her twin, that looked less convinced than she was, over her lame attempts to lie to herself and wiped her soft plump mouth on her towel. She had been giving herself the same talk each and every year and ne frowned noting how she never followed through with it. Predictable Mandy. Like clockwork.

Her friends had been trying to pull her out of her shell for so long and drag her to parties to show her a good time. If they couldn't even do it how did she expect herself to? Maybe this year would be

different for once. To be honest, she was okay with being a little nobody, a shy girl, a book worm. Deep down sometimes she longed to at least have more wild and fun memories of her youth before she would be going onto college while trying to get her writing career off the ground.

Mandy envisioned herself as an old, lonely, recluse of a writer in a cabin like house out in the middle of nowhere or a forest forsaking all contact with the outside world. She shook the thought and laughed at herself over it.

Her mother's yelling shook her out of her long winded thoughts once more.

"Mandy, your breakfast is on the table! It's getting cold! You better hurry!"

Her mother had now apparently replaced the buzzing alarm clock's snooze mode and there was no off button on her. She laughed at the thought of remote controlling a parent like an electronic device while picturing it in her head.

"I'll be right down, mom! Give me a minute! I'm showering now!" She called out as loud as she could but Mandy was often very soft spoken unlike her peers even when yelling.

Opening the shower door she stepped into the rather spacious shower that could easily fit three people and turned the knobs to her preferred temperature crying out a bit when cold water splashed her before it changed.

As it warmed up and fell on her she was enjoying the feel of the soothing water cascading down her bare body and it made her long black hair wetly stick to her bare skin. It covered most of her backside and fell over her shoulders and chest falling around her curves thick and dark.

Mandy had to use detangler in it which could take a bit to do since her hair was so long but if she didn't then her knots in her hair would become insufferable. She pre combed it in the shower before rinsing it all off.

Finishing bathing herself stopping to shave her legs and armpits smoothe she tried to be as quick as she could to exit the shower and get dressed. The water had been so warm it almost put her back to sleep so she had to turn the nob and make it a tad bit colder to help wake her up.

Once done, Mandy stepped out and wrapped a large fluffy white towel around her soft fair skinned body. Sighing and feeling a lot better she checked her reflection again in the mirror. As far as gaining new confidence went, her skin had cleared up a lot more lately too showing very few flaws on her face for which she was grateful. That meant less concealer and face washes to have to deal with.

Mandy quickly dried her wet face with her towel and began to towel dry her hair before combing it completely out with fast strokes. No time to slow down now. Today she decided to let it dry naturally and not blow dry it. She never got natural curls when it dried, which is something she envied other girls for, just flat feathered thick soft hair down past her hips barely touching the back of her upper thighs. Combing it could be a nightmare and take forever but today she was rushed so she did what she could with it as fast as possible.

Walking over to her closet she thought hard once more to try and pick out what she would wear. Mandy had her chin on her hand her face tilted sideways as she looked thoughtfully at her closet while still wrapped in her towel. The stress of picking out the perfect first day of school outfit was mounting as she stood in her bathroom brushing her teeth and flossing. Mandy could just picture Nikki's face when she showed up to school today wearing last years clothes.

Her fashionista friend would most likely try to talk her into going to the Starcourt Mall that recently opened up a few weeks ago. Most likely she would beg her to go with her sometime this weekend for sure. If it wasn't being a mallrat that Nikki tried to get Mandy to become then it was always trying to drag her to parties and to talk to boys. But knowing herself, Mandy would most likely decline.

She sighed hopelessly with her lack of options while digging through her clothes feeling nothing was good enough. Chucking the offending garments away from her not having time to put them back she tried

to find a decent outfit.

*Too boring and ugly. Too bright. Too baggy. Too out of style. Too tight and revealing!*

Oh God, what happened to her closet and why was she in such short supply of something nice but simple to wear? That's what she got for not going summer shopping with Nikki when she asked her to so it served her right she would have no back to school outfits prepared. She resolved that she would just have to make due with some of her nicer outfits from last year.

Almost giving a shout of triumph she pulled out her favorite grey hoodie that was neither too baggy nor too tight but hugged her shape nicely while still showing she had a developed chest. It was enough to keep her feminine form on modest display but free from prying eyes of the boys at school. Under that she would wear her off the shoulder grey shirt just in case she got too warm and wanted to remove her hoodie. She doubted she would. She loved her layers.

She grinned choosing her favorite knee length light blue pale denim skirt with the ruffled trim on the bottom and her favorite grey leggings, more like tights or spandex than anything, underneath to compliment the skirt and cover her bare legs.

Sitting on her bed she began putting on her equally grey knee high flash dance styled socks that stopped at the ankle and completed her outfit by slipping on her favorite shiny grey Tretorns. They were her favorite pair of classic design sneakers, very comfortable and very simple. She laced them up and then went to her vanity mirror putting her hands on her hips happy with her choice.

Mandy admired her grey and pale denim color ensemble pleased with the fact that she could cover herself up in her familiar comfortable layers. Damning confidence all to hell she noted that even on a somewhat warm day, she did not compromise her comfort opting for more revealing clothing.

Her wet hair was drying by now so she combed her hopelessly straight raven hair letting it fall down her shoulders and back. For once she wished for thick luxurious natural curls but it looked nice

even straight and falling down her back.

Sometimes she liked it tidy and tied up to keep it out of her round yet rather easy going gentle face but today she would let it loose and leave it down. Mandy rarely ever let her hair down much preferring long pigtails. But it looked good falling down to her waist even though it technically went even lower than that to the back of her upper thighs. She just felt like doing it a little differently as she knew if it were long and free it would add to her outfit.

As she studied herself, she noticed she was definitely getting older and more fuller in her figure as a young woman. Her baby face and some of her thick curves were natural on her fitting her shape and frame nicely and not because of a lack of exercise, which she got plenty of. Dare she even think maybe she was becoming even slightly more attractive? She had never thought of herself as pretty but rather just a mousey 'plain jane' type. She could see it somewhat as she grew into her bone structure better over the years and filled out more in the areas where she had been thinner previously. She was aging nicely and her face was pleasant to say the least. Simple and happy.

She saw herself as an ordinary girl nothing special. She had nothing interesting on her body to talk about, really. No scars. No birthmarks. No unusual or unique identifying marks. If she had to pick something she supposed she would pick her sea green eyes that sometimes turned teal or aqua from time to time but usually they were just a plain green color. They changed depending on her mood, the weather, and other strange things that she couldn't quite figure out.

Her friends always told her she was beautiful but that was different when coming from a close friend out of kindness and support. She wasn't thin but she wasn't overweight either. Some strange in between with a slight bit of curve to her body, her hips in an hourglass figure and somewhat thick. Her torso wasn't very long but her frame was decent.

Mandy never cared about her breast size either nor did she worry over pushup bras like Nikki did. She laughed when she thought of the time she tried to get her into a lingerie store to buy one and a lacy pair of panties or a night gown. Nikki was always trying to get her to dress more confidently.

Despite what she thought of herself, she had however noticed that the boys were staring more than they had in middle school. It made her uncomfortable to know that she was budding and developing more which was causing boys to notice and try to talk to her. They would come around more than the last two years but she would just shy away from them. She had always been a nobody and liked it that way. Too much attention made her nervous.

Because of this, not too long ago her mother and father had to have "the talk" with her. She didn't have the heart to tell them she already knew all about sex and how it worked. As well as how to be safe about it.

It was so embarrassing as they sat there trying to explain in stutters and stammers what she already knew, but she understood their hearts were in the right place and they meant well to protect their little girl. She just wasn't a little girl so much anymore. They would eventually have to accept that and stop worrying about her all the time.

Not only had she taken sex education class as a Sophomore getting a straight A but she had also been reading romance novels since she was thirteen years old. Maybe books weren't real life but she learned a lot from them and she enjoyed reading about love, sex, and marriage. The stories interested her, especially historical romance with medieval themes.

Those books told her about all the things she knew she would eventually want with a special someone in her life. Just... not right now. Not yet as she was saving herself anyway for the one who would sweep her off her feet. Waiting for 'the one'. So honestly her parents didn't have to worry about her doing something stupid one night with a random guy.

Her friend Nikki had often teased her so much because unlike her, Mandy wasn't boy crazy. She had no interest in dating or relationships and was far more interested in her grades, school work, and getting into a good college to do something with her love of writing and English. She aspired to be a great author one day maybe even to write children's books or fantasy novels.



She just didn't have room for romantic love in her life right now despite her positive feelings towards having it one day. Not only that but the boys in school just didn't do it for her. They were always looking at her in all her awkward glory more often than not and making her blush uncomfortably just to run from them.

She would turn and shy away which often made them talk about her and pass rumors that she was a tease doing it all on purpose. She imagined they were upset because she wouldn't let them make moves on her let alone get to first base. Mandy had a sense of valuable personal self control and self oriented goals.

Sex wasn't that big a deal to her, really. She didn't understand what the big deal was about it, even when reading her romance novels. Her books talked about how amazing it was to be one with another person but how would she know that? She had never even slow danced with a boy.

So when they came up to her she would just keep walking ignoring their suggestive comments, their assumptions about her, or their lustful stares. She just wanted to be left alone. It's not like she looked drop dead gorgeous like Tina or any of the other popular girls. She just guessed it was because of her soft clear face and her developed curves which she honestly had very little control over to be honest. One couldn't help how one grew up or how their looks would change. She wished she could go back to being ten when none of those things mattered and no one noticed.

As punishment for ignoring them and their attempts to approach her, it resulted in her being often labeled a prude and other harsh names out of misunderstanding of her shyness and lack of interest. Mandy didn't care as long as she kept to herself and her small circle of close friends who knew her better than anyone else.

*This year will be awesome. No more hiding, Mandy. You can do this. Everyone has to grow up sometime.*

Mandy tried but she knew it was inevitable she would go back on her own words to herself.

Finishing combing her hair she grabbed her reading glasses and put

them in their protective case shoving them into her grey denim book bag. The past few years of middle school and her beginning of high school being called "four eyes" made her rethink only some of her style choices and how to better fit in. But she still remained essentially herself despite the contacts she was now enjoying to hide that she wore reading glasses from the other kids at school.

Although she was sort of geeky and a bit of an outcast that didn't mean she couldn't look presentable. She dressed modest and comfortable to her own tastes despite what others may think of her.

Strapping her bookbag over her shoulder and grabbing anything else she needed tossing it into the big pocket she gave small hopeful smile in her mirror and then she hurried downstairs closing her door behind her. Flying down the steps gripping the handrail she made her way into the kitchen with an apologetic look on her face.

"That was more than a minute, Amanda Marie Hawkins."

Her mother scolded her gently in a teasing way as she was putting a sack lunch together for Calvin at the kitchen counter.

"Yeah, more than a minute, Hawkins."

Her little brother mimicked his mom's authoritative voice to taunt his older sister while chewing on a piece of cinnamon toast. He had the cinnamon all over his face and he looked pleased with himself grinning as he kicked his legs under the table while eating.

Mandy pointed her finger at him calling him a little parrot but he just giggled at her in response. She turned to look at her mom and gave a small exasperated sigh at her use of her full name.

Her mom only ever resorted to using her full name if Mandy was out of line, in trouble, or pressing on her last nerve about something. Mandy HATED being called Amanda and much preferred her shortened nickname. It's what all her friends called her and the teachers were gracious enough to go along with it too while doing rolecall in class, unless she was in trouble of course then they would call her by her last name to get her attention.

While she was proud to be her parents child and be a Hawkins, she hated that her last name that was given to her originated from a time of antiquity. All the way back to the very founding of the town of Hawkins, Indiana. Or to put it more correctly, it was actually named after her father's bloodline, Rick Hawkin's, due to his great, great, great, grandfather Jeremiah Hawkins.

It was he who originally helped the settlers build here and they had given life and prosperity to Hawkins, Indiana. It was also why her father was well known and very respected the whole town over, even by the Chief of the Hawkins Police Department, Jim Hopper.

Her father was asked to run for Mayor of Hawkins due to his lineage and being related to the original founder but he turned it down over his love of cars and working in the auto shop.

She was often teased over her last name being the same as the town so she tried to keep her last name and its legacy hidden but this was a small town. Everyone knew everyone else and everyone talked. Talk was cheap but also real secrets couldn't be kept secret for long. As soon as the other school kids learned that she was a Hawkins and discovered the history of the town for themselves they had never let her live it down that year. Until of course, they found something else to distract themselves with and gossip about.

"Good morning, Calvin. Having your usual dose of hyper-sugar high fix before school? Good for you! Great choice, mom!" She gave him a thumbs up and he grinned at her then stuck his tongue out at her.

"Oh, seriously? I should have thought about that before making it for him. If I have to sit through one more parent teacher conference over his hyperactivity in class I am going to lose it. It's honestly healthy for kids his age to be fired up and want to play. What is the deal?"

Her mother grumbled while sipping her coffee getting her own sugar fix and then looking at it realizing adults did it too, needing it badly sometimes, and rolling her eyes.

Mandy chuckled at her mom's comment and then immaturely returned the tongue out gesture to Calvin who went even further one upping her by showing his pre chewed toast in his mouth to her

laughing while he did it. She rolled her eyes but couldn't help but smile at the little cinnamon dusted monster and ruffled his sandy brown curly hair that matched his eyes as he yelled at her in defiance for doing so.

"Where's dad? Still sleeping?"

She chose to ignore her mother using her full name much to her discontent, grabbing a little bite of cinnamon toast on her own plate and popping a small piece into her mouth. She didn't have time to sit and eat everything but she kissed her mom on the cheek thanking her for it anyway.

"Oh, your father had to go in real early today. Rick said there was a lot of backlogged cars to work on with some of his crew having troubles and he said he would be home tonight as soon as he could be. He sends his love though. You know how it is at the shop."

Her mother glanced at her wrist watch and sighed putting everything down she was doing to begin gathering her things.

"Tardiness is like sneezing, one person does it and another one catches it." She laughed shaking her head at her own joke.

"I really need to hurry and drop off Calvin at school. I have some errands to run before I go in for my shift. It's gonna be another late night I'm afraid. Sorry, sweetie. You're on your own tonight but there are 'fend for yourself' leftovers from last night in the fridge."

"Mmmm, yum. Sounds appetizing." Mandy teased but she didn't really mind.

Katherine looked again at her watch nervously for almost the fifth time now as she tried to get herself and the carefree six year old ready to go. Mandy guessed she was feeling the daily pressures of sometimes feeling like a single parent when Mandy's father couldn't be at home to help. Suddenly she felt really guilty for sleeping in and not having helped with Calvin.

"Sorry I overslept, mom." Was all she could say but her mom hugged her telling her it was alright.

Katherine didn't mind as she loved supporting her husband when she could and spending time with their children often. That's what Mandy loved about her mother. How stoic, loving, and caring of a guardian she was to her children while keeping her love alive for their father despite not seeing him often.

She could make it work no matter how rough things got. Both her parents loved each other very much even after all their years together as high school sweethearts. She hoped to have something like what they shared one day with a special someone of her own. No matter what came at them, her parents could always say they provided for their children and that their kids never wanted for most things.

Mandy's thoughts shifted back to her father. Her poor father who often worked himself to the bone to help provide for them. She frowned hoping he wouldn't be in too much pain again when he got home ever since his arthritis was seeming to get worse.

As a lead mechanic, working with his hands was a necessity. The doctors told him to ease up a bit but in his need to help people with their car troubles he never listened and kept going while simply taking medicine to help with the aches and pains.

Mandy thought he had beautiful hard working hands despite how knotted up they had become over the years. He was a hard working man seemingly the last of a dying breed in Hawkins. He never left a customer unsatisfied with what he did for them and their vehicles. He took great pride in his work just as her mother did.

Because of his attention to detail and his kindness to the folks of Hawkins he eventually became his own boss and took over the shop. He got good hours and made decent pay to help their mom cover the bills and keep the house taken care of while also keeping them fed and clothed.

Her mother was a head nurse who helped to take care of the sick and injured while assisting top of their class doctors and surgeons that came to this town from many different states and medical schools. Some of them most notably the John Hopkins school and hospitals in Baltimore, Maryland. Her mom being high in demand as a head nurse in charge at the Hawkins Memorial Hospital often had her pulling

late night shifts as well to bring money in.

For a small town it could still get hectic even with a minimal amount of accidents and injuries so she was sure her mom would never be out of a job at the hospital. There would always be the sick and the terminal in need of a caring gentle hand and a warm reassuring smile the likes of which her mother was happy to provide along with many others in her field.

At the same time, both her parents acknowledged that everyone in the house chipped in to help keep things afloat and keep them close as a functional family.

In addition to helping run errands, watching Calvin, and helping around the house, Mandy's books were mostly her company. No one had a love for books and learning as much as she did, not even Nancy Wheeler, who practically LIVED for studying and got perfect grades each year without fail. They used to be slightly competitive of one another until they became somewhat closer over summer break.

Unlike Mandy, Nancy was coming out of her shell and living it up a little more and even scored a boyfriend the popular kid Steve Harrington. She was lucky to be able to be so open and free and not afraid to be herself while still maintaining her popularity. Mandy really envied her sometimes.

Only a few times when Mandy was younger did her parents ever have to hire a babysitter to watch them when neither one of them could be home in time to keep an eye on them and Mandy wasn't old enough for the responsibility. Now that Mandy was seventeen and more responsible they both felt they could trust her to be home watching herself and her little brother with no fear.

Hawkins was a safe and quiet town so there was no need to worry about breakins or anything like that. No murders had ever happened here or anything dangerous really. The only time something truly bad went down was a few mysterious unsolved cases of a total of four vanishing teenage girls. One of which was the disappearance and presumed death of Barbara Holland who had been her and Nancy's classmate and friend from last year. More Nancy's friend but still relatively close to Mandy.

Nancy had been extremely close to her friend Barb so it completely wrecked her when she found out she went missing. For the next year she tried to get answers and figure out what had happened to her friend but had come up empty just as the investigators and local police had.

Chief Jim Hopper also took it hard because he felt like he should have been able to protect the inhabitants of this town and give them peace of mind and answers. There simply were none. The cases were eventually filed away in cold cases for the FBI when they took over because the trail fizzled out and went dead with no leads to be found. Including Barb's case.

The strangest thing about them was that they were all young teen girls from Hawkins high school who went missing never to return. The missing girls were on a pattern of one girl a year for the past three years until eventually it seemed to stop. Even weirder, all of them had been natural redheads or with dyed red hair. All of them soft, gentle, and sort of outcasts like Mandy.

Her father had her practically on lockdown having Chief Hopper doing him a favor of picking her up and dropping her off personally to and from school not letting her go anywhere as the disappearances mounted. Hopper never told her anything about the cases when she tried to ask as he had to keep quiet about it until they could possibly be solved.

She saw the anger and frustration in his eyes every ride she had with him. When the disappearances stopped, Hawkins went back to its sleepy little burb like feel and everything just fell in to place almost going back to normal. There had been no incidents as of yet this year but she could feel the unease from the townsfolk as if they were holding their breath silently waiting for it.

Barb's case was tragic for everyone and they all mourned her loss deeply with the other girls because she was such a sweet and intelligent young woman who could have really made something of herself in life. The whole town held a memorial for her and her family and then a separate one for the other missing girls. Barb's coffin was an empty casket. The lack of a body making everything so much worse. Her parents had grieved for so long they sold the house

due to unwanted memories to move and start fresh. Not to forget... but to attempt to heal and be normal.

Mandy was by Nancy's side the entire time during the service and funeral. It absolutely wrecked her. Other than that, Chief Hopper kept this town cleaned up something fierce and always did his job to the best of his ability. He really cared for his community.

Mandy looked at how small and fragile her brother was. She thanked God and their lucky stars that something like what happened to Barb and the other missing teenage girls had never happened to her little brother, even if he was a young boy and not a female, let alone herself despite not being a redhead.

Her parents would fly to pieces and she would be absolutely devastated never the same again. They wouldn't let either of them out of their sight or leave home much when it was all going on and Hopper instigated a curfew for all children and families during his investigation.

Mandy snapped her thoughts back to the present and noticed her mom's frown as she repetatively checked her watch and told Calvin to hurry up with his breakfast as nice as she possibly could in her haste to leave.

"Now who's going to be late?"

Mandy jokingly teased her mom turning it around on her in a silly way not meaning any disrespect.

She lifted an eyebrow sarcastically to her as she watched her mom rush like a tornado around the kitchen grabbing her purse and keys whirling here and there to straighten up at the same time while somehow managing to grab her little brother to usher him to the door.

"Go, go, Supermom!" She said with an amused smile while clapping and cheering.

Her mom looked at her funny but then smiled taking Calvin by the hand to lead him from the table with his sack lunch while checking



her wristwatch for an amount of time Mandy lost count of. A joke around the hospital was "never a day late Katherine" because she too took pride in her punctuality.

When Calvin grabbed the last few bites of his toast as he hopped up from the stool he took his mother's hand and made his way to the door. Grabbing his small backpack he followed their mother to the front living room dragging himself slightly not wanting to go to school.

Mandy sighed not ready for her first day either, although she was excited to see her friends and catch up with them. She helped pick up the plates taking them to the sink to soak and lightly cleaning the table off before following them out the door.

Once outside she turned to lock up with her own spare house key. As they were walking down the driveway to the station wagon their mom used her spit to clean off her little brother's dirty face from the sugar and cinnamon. He whined at her in response while wriggling to get away from her.

Mandy rolled her eyes laughing at his messy spit covered face as their mom worked on it with her fingers. She locked the door up and clutched her bookbag then nodded telling her mom it was high time she took off too or she really would be late.

As her mom rushed her little brother to her station wagon, the car her father had said would be the perfect family car, she waved at her daughter and attempted to buckled up Calvin. She tried to while he was being a sort of a brat wriggling around not wanting to go.

"Do you want a ride, sweetheart?" Her mother asked her as Calvin gave her trouble struggling in his seat as she buckled him in. Mandy smiled knowing she had enough on her plate to deal with. Due to her little bro being a pest and the late shift she would have to work tonight while also worrying about her husband, she turned it down to give her a break.

"No, mom, it's okay. You go ahead. I will be fine." Her mom blew her a kiss and smiled then got in the car herself and honked the horn at her. Calvin was pressing his face up to the glass sticking his tongue

out at his sister being obnoxious and grinning.

She often thought of getting a bicycle but she preferred walking and enjoying the scenic view of the farm lands and trees along the Indiana country roads.

Her mom suddenly remembered something when she looked across the street and then back to Mandy. Her daughter hadn't even noticed yet but she did so she called out to Mandy from her open window on her side.

"Oh, honey! I forgot to tell you! It appears we have new neighbors now across the street. They just moved here all the way from California. That's far and the drive must have been hard on them. So I spoke with the wife, Susan Hargrove, I believe? She's very sweet. I'm thinking of inviting their family over to dinner one night. Maybe say hi if you can to them? They might even have someone, you know kids your age, to make friends with. Okay, Ciao!"

Her mother blew her kisses and then pointed to the driveway and the moving truck parked across the way from their house. She beamed before she got in the station wagon taking off with Calvin. He was no longer messing up the window with his mouth and was focused on smashing his action figure toys together while talking to himself.

*New neighbors? Well, that's pretty cool.* She mused letting her eyes wander over there for a minute taking in the scene.

She saw the moving truck with the workers standing around taking a smoke break. She also saw three cars but didn't see any people yet. How had she not noticed the truck? Maybe Nikki was right when she said Mandy was an space cadet that barely saw anything around her at times.

Seriously, a move all the way from California? That was even more rare. People from the glamorous West Coast didn't often leave such a place as that to come to a boring drab place like Hawkins out here in the country on the East Coast.

Mandy pocketed her key in her bookbag and walked to the end of the drive taking in the sight before her of the new family moving in. She

couldn't stay and chat or look too long as she really needed to begin her walk to school in order to make it before the first period bell would ring at eight.

As she walked down the sidewalk she tried to catch a glimpse at the new neighbors her mother mentioned. The family had all finally walked out of their new home and the movers were resuming their carrying and placing of packed boxes and furniture into the house that had a wide driveway and a swinging chair on the backyard lawn. The mother and father were now standing outside side by side watching while a younger girl kept walking and then sat on the curb not really too focused on her surroundings.

She saw the tall man had dark hair and a dark mustache with a rather hostile and edgy look to him as he hugged a softer yet timid looking woman beside him with red wavy hair. That must have been Susan Hargrove, Mrs Hargrove in other words, and Mr Hargrove her husband. The tall gruff man was snapping at the movers and barking orders at them rather aggressively as they picked up the heavy objects and brought them inside the house.

Susan while standing beside him seemed troubled by his shouting but kept her silence letting her husband have full control. Her red hair matched the likes of the young girl who was sitting on the edge of the sidewalk evidently trying to avoid all of them. She was messing around with what appeared to be a skateboard that had a loose wheel on it and was trying to fix it.

She got a better look at the three cars. One was an old Ford pickup, rather big and clunky with a bit of rust, that was most likely Mr Hargrove's truck. A smaller white Volkswagon which might be Susan's was parked beside the truck. On the curb a few feet away rested a beautiful blue sports car that looked to be a Camaro of sorts. Who's car was that? Couldn't be the redheaded girl's since she looked like she was too young to drive.

As she took in the entire car starting with the license plate and hood, she didn't see the older boy, maybe Mr Hargrove's son, that had walked over to it until he was resting against the side of it on driver side door. He leaned against what appeared to be his car after all and was smoking a cigarette. He was long and lean and very well cut for

his age, almost looking way more mature than a high school boy would look. His appearance and style was laid back and super confident but he looked angry too.

Mandy noticed he was all clad in denim, jeans and a matching denim jacket, with a white muscle shirt underneath and looked to be about her age if not slightly older. She could barely tell because of the way he held himself. If he was smoking chances were he was at least eighteen years old.

He had shoulder lengthed wild blonde curly hair in the style of a mullet, long in the back and short and unruly in front. His expression was as if he was making a statement that he was too cool for Hawkins, Indiana. The boy leaned confidently against the blue car showing clear ownership of the fast looking property that obviously was built for speed.

She didn't know the exact model but it definitely looked like it was fast and she wouldn't want to be in a car like that with a dangerous looking boy like him driving it. She could always ask her father about the car as he would know.

Allowing her eyes to roam over the laid back, muscled, and highly irritated boy she was taking in his features and manner of dress. He definitely looked like he was from California and looked extremely angry about being here in Hawkins.

She felt bad for him just a tad bit. Maybe he had lost all his friends and contacts out there being ripped away from it all just to come here. If he was in high school he would have to start fresh getting to know everyone and suffering the pain of being the new guy. Mandy had lived her whole life in Hawkins so she couldn't quite know what that would feel like but she imagined by his face he was very upset about it and it wasn't too pleasant for him. It almost looked like he was giving a death stare to the older man she assumed to be his father as if he blamed him for all of this.

She looked away when the boy suddenly noticed her and turned to look in her direction. He had licked his lips sensuously and slowly as he gazed at her, his stare catching her by surprise. Mandy noticed he was looking her up and down while taking long deliberate drags on

his cigarette and blowing them out slowly through his nose and mouth.

His sudden attention on her and how he looked at her screamed for Mandy to stay far away from him and that he was pure trouble. She swallowed hard as he sort of glared at her at first as if sizing her up. He then got the most strangest grin slowly spreading on his face as kept looking at her with renewed interest.

She cast her eyes sheepishly to the ground feeling guilty for being so nosy daring to lock eyes on him like she did. Keeping her own eyes downcast while clutching her book bag close to her. It took her a few minutes but eventually she unfroze and got her feet moving walking away fast not wanting him to look at her like that anymore. She shyly walked on not liking how he watched her.

Straightening herself up being angry at how had eyed her with his nervewracking stare she was now holding her chin up a bit higher than before. Mandy wasn't trying to be snooty, she was just trying to not appear afraid or unnerved by his cold look he had given her followed by a super frightening grin.

She heard him laugh deeply with amusement in his voice as she proudly walked away from the block and his intense scrutiny of her. She could still feel his gaze burning holes in the back of her head while heading away from the family and their house glad to be putting them and the Californian boy far behind her. As she kept going she tried not to sneak casual glances back his way but each time she did he was still looking while flicking his cigarette thoughtfully.

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Mandy had only been walking down the road with her big gawdy headphones on attached to her Walkman playing her favorite tape when about maybe fifteen to twenty minutes later she suddenly heard the loud roar of a car engine even over the volume of her music. Lowering them down to hang on her neck, she looked behind her with her eyes going wide when she saw that it was the very same blue car from earlier. It sped up to her flying like the Devil himself was chasing it or powering it. The engine revved up even louder as it

got closer and she took a wide birth away from it and the road walking more towards the ditch. Instead of passing her as she had expected it to do, the boy driving it made the car keep pace with her as she walked on.

The blonde haired boy that she could now see had amazing and clear blue eyes was flashing a 'Devil may care' smirk at her as he was tapping on his steering wheel to some loud rock music. He was burning up his tires slightly, clearly showing off to her, while his radio blasted obnoxiously from inside the cab of the vehicle. She could feel it vibrating in her chest it was so strong.

She cast a quick glance but looked away and kept walking trying hard to ignore him and his car that maybe he thought would impress her. He made all kinds of faces at her each time she looked at him out of the corner of her eye, finally sticking his tongue out wagging it at her and whooping and hollering as he enjoyed his music. He finally lowered his shades over his eyes and gave a smoldering smile at her while licking his lips like he did earlier. He sped up and was now driving past her.

It wasn't until she chanced looking fully towards him once more before he sped off that she happened to see the passenger side of his car. Sitting there was the young girl with flaming red hair from earlier who had the skateboard and she was riding with him shotgun. The girl was yelling at him to stop being crazy, slapping at his arm, and angrily begging him to stop driving like an idiot. She shouted at him that he would wind up getting them both killed or running someone over.

He ignored her and was looking from the road to Mandy and then back to the road again still hammering away the beat of the music on his steering wheel not paying her any mind. The redhead had a scowl on her pretty young face that was peppered with freckles and it was mixed with a little bit of fear riddling her eyes. It was most likely his little sister. Or his cousin or something? They didn't really look too related or similar at all. Maybe he was adopted?

Mandy felt bad for the girl, but he was being pretty silly, so she was failing horribly at hiding a grin while being hard pressed to ignore his wild antics. She opted to keep a straight face with an uninterested

expression fighting to keep it that way as he sped off in front of her in a trail of exhaust smoke. His tires screeched as he burned rubber, picking up enough speed to show he was clearly breaking the speed limit. He did this without a single care in the world or having the slightest consideration of other drivers that might be sharing the road with him.

She was shook up a little bit at his behavior and it definitely made her curious but she decided he was definitely bad news. Complete trouble she needed to avoid at all costs. Were all Californians like that? Driving wrecklessly with no guilt or fear? He better hope he didn't run into Hopper or his patrol buddies because he had been known to slap some pretty hefty speeding fines on people, careless teenagers or otherwise.

Mandy knew she should stay far away from him. Even his little sister, if that is what she was, could barely stand being in the car with him and obviously didn't like him all that much.

As she continued her travels to school, all she thought of was that arrogant flirtatious smile he shot her way and how he ran his tongue over his lovely curved lips. It had been so different from the cold aggressive stare he gave her earlier as she was walking by their new house.

Mandy really hoped her mother wouldn't invite them for dinner if that meant he came as a packaged deal.

What a strange boy. A very dangerous impulsive boy. Maybe half cocked and moody just a bit like a bipolar storm or the ocean in a tempest. But something in her stirred as she recalled his blue eyes while he had looked out at her from the young girl's side of the car through the open window. Her heart fluttered for a bit but she crammed it down and ignored it.

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After another twenty minutes Mandy finally made it to the Hawkins high school parking lot. For some odd reason she could not keep the strange and wild boy and the angry little redhead out of her mind and she shook her head while laughing at herself for it.

Seeing Nikki, Tucker, and Alex waiting for her, she half jogged up to her friends at the front doors and she noticed they were talking and laughing while waiting for her as they usually did.

"Mandy! You made it. And here we thought you were finally going to be unpredictable and show up horribly late!"

They called to her as she sauntered up awkwardly to them in a half run half walk motion holding onto her bag for life to stop it from bouncing. All three of them greeted her happily and hugged her when she got to them.

Nikki was looking cute as ever, dressed to impress on the first day, her long blonde hair having her bangs held up by her stylish sunglasses that glittered in the sun and hoop earrings on each ear. Her blue eyes were bright and alert as she smiled at Mandy.

Nikki had on a cute mini skirt and a halter top and a matching purse with her nails freshly manicured. She decked out her wrists with gold and silver bangles that clanged together as she moved and wildly flung her arms around talking animatedly to the group.

Mandy loved her energy, it always brought her up when feeling low and cheered her up easy.

Tucker was in jeans and a grey hip jacket with his dark spikey hair combed up to a fluffy point on top of his head. He always preferred short spikey styled hair and his dark auburn hairstyle matched his dark greyish brown eyes. His smile was wide when he saw Mandy and he hugged her the tightest.

Alex as usual was looking awesome. He was a handsome Asian boy with dark hair and dark eyes, his hair always silky, thin, and long and shaggy. His grin was lazy as he had his hands in his jeans pocket sporting one of his favorite band hoodies for Ozzy Osbourne the Prince of Darkness.

They checked out her threads noticing she hadn't changed a bit and Nikki made a funny jab that she simply needed to take her shopping one weekend at Starcourt Mall for new clothes.



"Oh my gosh, Mandy, you look cute so don't take this the wrong way but, what's the expiration date on those clothes, girl? You and me. Starcourt Mall. Not up for discussion, my sweet. We simply have to get you some new gear for the new year! Gotta get you a boyfriend somehow."

Nikki giggled and popped her gum excitedly.

Mandy smiled and rolled her eyes. That was her friend Nikki for her, always her fashion advisor and guide to the stars. Mandy often thought she would be a singer, rockstar, model, or movie star one day.

"Yeah.. maybe. Ummm if I don't have to watch Calvin and don't get a boatload of homework to do within the first week."

Mandy always had to come up with excuses to stay home so Nikki would no doubt find a way to talk her into it, she knew her very well.

Tucker and Alex groaned at her lame response but were soon in a deep conversation about the newest video game consoles, the arcade, and games coming out this year after hugging and greeting her.

"So... are you guys excited about the first day back?" Mandy said to all of them and no one specific in particular, not really wanting to interrupt Alex and Tucker from their video game heaven debate.

She grinned eagerly at them. She wasn't much for smiling and most often than not she had a confused look or a somber look on her face, especially when concentrating hard on class work or reading. So seeing her smile at anything other than the promise of school work and books was impossible.

Her friends smirked at her while teasing her but in a playful manner. Some of them rolled their eyes and looked at her as if to say 'are you kiddin' me?'

"Yeah, yeah, we get it. You're already eager to sit in your little corner and read yourself into oblivion until you become a statue growing cobwebs. Mandy... when are you ever going to live a little and join us? Huh? Come to party with us sometime. Just ONE."

Nikki grinned and Tucker and Alex both agreed with her encouraging her to do it.

When she smiled shyly, Tucker got closer and gave her a playful shove. Tucker was always nudging her and teasing her for being a semi loner, who in fact had friends, but barely did any activities with them other than help them study and do school work or hang at her place on rare occasion when she invited them over.

She was, as he put it, too safe. Too tame. A late blooming bud of a rose just waiting to share its beautiful color with all the world. He had written her many poems over the years and she loved every single one of them calling him very talented. He had a poet's soul and she didn't mind him using it to peg her as a joykill when he put it so eloquently.

He was grinning from ear to ear at seeing her today, anxious she guessed, as he barely saw her all summer long. In fact all three of them had their own thing going on after last year ended but Mandy didn't have an excuse. She just liked to be on her own mostly.

Nikki piped in to tease along with him on that note to try and make her blush. It was her fun little game to do. To see how far she could push her before she shied away taking off and left them to go hide in her books. She lived in her own little world but they asked her often to expand it a little, so she had tried over the years to be better about it. This year might be different. She could almost feel a change in the air.

"C'mon guys, let her be. If she wants to be crazy old cat lady with a million books sitting by the fireplace, then let her."

Nikki winked to her and smacked her gum her big shiny hoop earrings glistening in the sunlight. It wasn't a clear day today so the sun tried its best to filter through the partly cloudy skies.

"Haha. Funny. Okay, guys I get it. I know I'm kind of a recluse..." she began gazing at her feet and shuffling them, her silver Tretorns sliding noisily against the gravel lot.

She wasn't very good at taking the heat of her friends jokes too well

but she never got mad just slightly overwhelmed and embarrassed. A small blush was beginning to creep on her face.

Tucker and Alex exchanged grinning glances as Nikki smiled then leaned in to hug her showing that there were no hard feelings and was only teasing. She said she just wanted her to try and come out of her shell a little more. Be a little more receptive. Mandy nodded understanding where she was coming from.

"A recluse? That's putting it mildly."

Alex laughed then threw an arm around Mandy as he chatted up the rest of the gang about how their summer went. They were all caught up in talking, and at first she was listening intently but began to drift. Mandy zoned out thankful they had something else to discuss besides her. While she was somewhere else afar off, she looked around the school grounds.

That's when she noticed it.

The blue car from earlier.

Sitting in the lot and sparkling slightly under the sun.

There was no driver in it but she knew the blonde wild boy it belonged to. Her heart dropped in her stomach and her mouth went dry. She swallowed hard fading back in on her friends talking near her.

"Guys..." She started to speak but they were so wrapped up in their conversation they barely heard her soft spoken voice interrupting. Her shy voice was too soft compared to their loud confident ones.

"Umm... guys?" She attempted again to get their attention and they stopped mid chatter to look at her then to the place her gaze was directed at. They saw the car and one of them shrugged as if not getting the point.

"Who does that car belong to? Did anyone happen to see or notice? Actually see the person who owns it when it drove up?"

Mandy inquired with something dropping in the pit of her stomach.

She had hoped to AVOID the crazy guy she saw earlier but now she felt that would be impossible since apparently they were both going to the SAME school. Hopefully this was a different car. All she needed was a description that didn't match the boy from earlier and she could breathe easy.

"No. Why do you ask?" Tucker replied as he scuffed something off of his shoe acting like he didn't care but trying a little too hard making it obvious he did.

"Got a thing for Camaros and fast cars all of a sudden or people who drive them?"

His voice almost sounded envious. Jealous even. He drove a hand me down car that his parents had given him so she guessed it sort of wounded his pride as she used to playfully tease him about it and yet happily accepted lifts from him from time to time seeing how proud he was to have a car.

"It just looks.. familiar is all." She halfway lied continuing to stare lost in how the sunlight reflected off of its sleek body.

It sat there quiet and seemingly harmless when the boy wasn't in it behind the wheel. The illusion was almost charming but she knew that a beast of a machine like that could really tear up the road with the right driver controlling it. Like he had earlier when staring at her clearly flirting.

"Oh, yeah! Wait, I do recall that car pulling up! I completely forgot to dish!" Nikki piped up with an eager look on her face. Her gum should be going stale in flavor by now with how long she had been chewing on it.

"Okay, so, this rad car comes speeding up into the lot. And I am looking to see if it is someone I know from last year, when all of a sudden... this super hot guy with blond curly hair, sunglasses, a ciggy dangling from his sexy lips, and a little bit of peach fuzz and a mustache, swings open his car door and steps out... He had the strongest legs I've ever seen. Denim jeans and black boots. I almost DIED!..."

Nikki trailed on and on retelling the story to their friends while Mandy zoned out and stared at the car with panic in her gut. She knew the description all too well.

"The boy." She cut in making Nikki pause and listen.

"He's new. He just moved here. This morning." Mandy spoke while still deep in thought.

"I saw him and his... little sister? A redhead and their parents. They were all standing on the lawn across the street from my house with movers carrying furniture in and unloading a moving truck."

Mandy recounted her own tale of first seeing him but she left out the part where he stared at her with danger in his eyes and then practically ran her off the road while going hog wild in his car speeding off like a lunatic.

"Oh my god... no way!" Nikki gushed chewing her gum even more frantically finally changing out the old one for a new piece.

"You live across the street from Hawkin's hottest guy ever to grace the map of this sleepy boring town?! Oh, you must tell me EVERYTHING, girl!"

Tucker and Alex exchanged glances and rolled their eyes. She laughed grabbing Mandy's hand and dragging her off from the boys so they could have quick girl talk on their way to class.

"Wait... what about us?" They heard Alex say and he frowned as he threw his hands up in the air and shook his head. He then placed his hands on the hips of his denim jeans clearly defeated.

"It's a girl thing. Let them gossip. I still think we're handsome and two of the most eligible bachelors of this school." Tucker looked at Alex grinning at one of his best friends who nodded back in agreement stroking his chin in mock thought.

"Well, aside from Steve 'the hair' Harrington, you mean." They both looked a bit sad recalling how popular and handsome their fellow classmate was that got all the ladies and never leaving any good ones for them. A dejected look and sigh and then more grinning as they

cheered each other up making jokes about it.

"Oh yeah, boy! And if it totally makes you feel better? I still think you're pretty." Alex made a fake girly voice twirling his hair and popping imaginary gum imitating Nikki.

"No, YOU'RE pretty!" Tucker teased back in his best valley girl impression and they both laughed when Alex finally pushed him telling him to stop before anyone else could hear it.

They were just comfortable as friends like that and they goofed off often making each other laugh all the time until it hurt. It wasn't hard for their comical duo impressions and routines to also made Nikki and Mandy crack up whenever they witnessed their antics.

The boys trailed behind Nikki and Mandy but split off to go to their separate classes hollaring at the girls a promise to meet up with them at lunch break.

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Nikki and Mandy were in their own world as they chattered on their way to their lockers first to grab their books for first period English.

"So... tell me more about this Mr Mysterious heart throb from California. Mmmm, because he was super fine. I bet he broke so many hearts back home and now he's gonna take even more here. He might even rival King Steve in that area. What do you think?"

Nikki was leaning in intently, grinning with her eager eyes wide, and waiting impatiently for Mandy to spill it. Mandy rolled her own eyes at her getting her books ready while slipping out a small sigh at her friend in a playful way.

"I didn't even notice he had a little sister with him." Nikki laughed twirling her hair while Mandy concentrated shyly on loading up some of her books and supplies into her familiar assigned locker. She was taking only what she would need to class not wanting to make her book bag too heavy to carry like last year.

Before shutting her locker she paused taking out some of her fave polaroids of her and her friends from her bag and taped a few of

them to her locker door on the inside. She shut it locking it up and turned to Nikki. Thank goodness the locker didn't jam this time like it did last year. Maybe they finally fixed it.

Turning to her best friend she sighed and looked up at the ceiling then back to Nikki and laughed softly.

"Yeah, you wouldn't, huh? Because I bet your eyes were glued to his Adonis like body the entire time, right?" She laughed and shook her head at Nikki's predictable boy crazy nature.

Nikki popped her gum and wrenched up her eyebrows clearly not knowing who that was.

"Who's Adonis? Is he a super hot model or something? Let me borrow the magazine so I can see!"

Mandy laughed at her hopelessly sprung friend.

"Yeah, something like that. Anyway, I don't know, I didn't really get a close up look at him at all."

It was a half truth to be fair but she maintained her fib of their weird encounter on her way to school not wanting to really talk about it. She just wanted to move past it and let it go.

"Oh, Mandy, you never notice a good thing when it's right in front of you. Are your romance novels you read not teaching you enough about this sort of thing yet, or what? Do I have to teach you about the birds and the bees again?"

Nikki laughed and grinned poking her own two fingers into her other hand making it look like a hole and sliding them in. Then she poked Mandy. Mandy turned six shades of red looking around and begged her to stop mouthing the words wide eyed.

"That's a secret, you swore you wouldn't bring that up in public!" She covered her face in her books held tight to her chest as they walked to English class.

From time to time, Mandy took a break from academia and book learning to revel in the occasional romance novels she found in used

book stores. She never read them in class or around the school campus though, only at home.

She also liked to read them in one of the private lockable study rooms in the school library where she often worked during lunch break. She helped out the librarian Mrs Bannister, a very sweet old lady and one of her few adult friends she had, because she needed all the help she could get really.

Mandy just LOVED her romance novels. They were sweet and beautiful to her spoken in the language of love fostered by careing and amazing authors. They were a thrill to read and gave her strange but pleasant feelings sometimes that secretly deep down she enjoyed immensely. She wouldn't ever tell anyone else about it besides Nikki.

It was a dirty secret, the only real top secret she ever had to share with Nikki in confidence. She trusted Nikki never to blow her cover or ever tell anyone and so far over the years she had kept it a secret. Sometimes Nikki would even help her find new ones to read and further humor her guilty pleasure.

From time to time, however, her friend would give her silly remarks about it in private to make her face break out in a heavy blush just for fun.

"Yeah well, from what I saw, this 'Adonis' you mentioned looks like he came right off the cover of one of those Harlequinn books I caught you reading. Except with a super sexy styled mullet, a pierced ear, and a bad to the bone vibe."

Mandy couldn't disagree with her on that one. He did radiate bad boy all over him from head to toe. As for looking like one of her romance novel guys, that was a stretch. He was good looking but not tall, dark, and handsome as the characters the authors described. Okay, so he WAS tall looking and handsome. But he had blonde hair and blue eyes and looked like he had soaked up a lot of the California sun so he wasn't like the characters in her books besides those two things.

"He looks like a hot damn Lost Boy or that one dude from St. Elmo's Fire. Oh my goodness, he can definitely fill in a pair of denims and a tight jacket quite nicely. That butt! Mmmm!"



She was waving her face with her hand as if she were burning up with passion and on fire then giggled covering her mouth with her hand.

Mandy refused to indulge in her hormonal infatuation with boys and kept her lips pursed about the subject but smirked at her in good humor. She knew, unlike her friend, how to keep her emotions and hormones in check. She wasn't going to swoon over or be with just ANY guy. She definitely wasn't going to fall for a bad boy either.

It would have to be someone very sweet and special to turn her head or make her feel those longing pangs, or butterflies, as described in her books. Someone strong, loving, loyal, and deeply in love with her in return. Someone romantic and passionate. Someone gentle and patient.

Sometimes she wished one of the heroic and chivalrous guys that were in her romance novels would come to life and appear before her to show her what real love was really all about, except younger and more her age. She knew friendship and family love but had yet to experience romantic love.

"Okay, Nikki, that's nice. I'll bring a bucket of water for you next time to help you cool off." She chuckled at her friend and Nikki made a face sticking her tongue out at Mandy over comment.

"Let's just get to class before Mr Watkins grinds us into fine powder verbally for being late."

They both laughed and as they walked through the class doors Nikki said one last thing before they split to take their seats.

"Well, you can't hold out forever for white knights and dashing rogue pirates in your books, Mandy. Eventually, someone is going to steal your heart sweeping you off your feet and they will be less than perfect, I can guarantee you that."

She laughed and walked ahead of Mandy taking her seat.

Mandy shushed her shyly and sat down in her own seat across from her one row over opening up her textbook and apologizing to Mr

Watkins for being less than punctual this morning.

"Okay, girls, social hour is over. Please turn to page one of your textbooks so we can get to it on reading Romeo and Juliet by none other than the late great William Shakespear. After a few chapters we will sit and discuss what we've read. This WILL be on the test Friday..."

All the classroom groaned to have a test so soon when just starting the school semester. He eyed around the room nodding completely ignoring their discontent.

"Yes... so make sure you pay close attention. I want you all to write down in the modern English language what you think they are saying in Victorian Era English and translate it then give a reading of that to the class along with the original text. Be sure to cite your page number and the act and scene listed. Don't forget to partner up with your reading buddy."

He turned his balding head to the chalkboard and began to write down in perfect cursive the First act and scene they were to go over and eventually recite.

"I've got my reading buddy right here!" Jeff, one of the notorious class clowns, shouted out while raising his friend Tommy's hand.

This illicited a slight titter and giggling from some of the students in the class and Mr Watkins turned to him to sarcastically answer Jeff over his childish behavior. He then cleared his throat to begin the reading to the class.

Nikki popped her gum without thinking and covered her mouth. She had been busted with it before by Mr Watkins and hated to have him force her to get rid of it. Mandy gave a gentle grin but rolled her eyes unimpressed when Tommy made a show of his worth to the class as a reading partner. He was flexing his muscles kissing his bicep and doing a strong man impersonation then giving a sarcastic little bow at his desk when some girls applauded him.

He was a total jerk and she absolutely loathed him. For three years he had made her miserable stalking her around the campus to mess

with her. He did some of the most stupidest things to her. Anything to try and make her miserable or get others to laugh at her. He was always popping up at inconvenient times to torment her and he enjoyed it, she could tell.

His wide grin and his freckles standing out, his eyes wild with pleasure from scaring her or teasing her. Sometimes he would try to get hands on with her and she would have to slip out from underneath him and run as fast as she could away from him.

She thought about telling Carol about his behavior as they were dating but she doubted someone like Carol, a popular and very salty vicious girl, would believe her much less deign to speak with her let alone be caught dead occupying the same breathing space as Mandy.

She didn't really ever hate or even strongly dislike anyone but she definitely loathed Tommy H. It was a miracle he even had Carol for a girlfriend but with what she knew of her, they both deserved each other.

Right before he could start, the classroom door swung open and in walked Mandy's worst fear, all 5'8" of him, dripping with intimidation and oozing with self confidence.

The girls dropped their jaws and stopped what they were doing as he casually made his way into the room and sat down at the only open seat available. Most of their eyes had been on his backside as he strode in. And lucky her, of all the seats in this class he could be fated to take, his seat was right. Behind. Mandy. Hawkins. Joy of joys and just her damn luck.

When he had walked past her it seemed as if he hadn't even noticed all the attention he was getting or even hearing all the excited chattering or whispers around the room. At one point a female student had lightly whistled at him and he didn't even care he just kept walking. She guessed he was used to all the girls flirting with him or throwing themselves at him.

Mandy couldn't deny he was confident but she saw something else in his eyes and his hardened face. Noticing that his eyes were a darker blue at the moment they appeared as if a little sad or a little lost and

from what she remembered them looking like earlier they now had looked like a deep chaotic ocean swirling. Making short eye contact with him made her feel as if she was lost at sea gazing into those deep pools so she tried so very hard not to.

She huffed and hid her head behind her textbook trying to ignore it. She hated his strong face and his cocky body language. His eyes were intimidating and it sucked all the air out of the room making it hard to breathe.

Another guy to loathe even more than Tommy? Was that even possible? She was trying hard to focus on her textbook and drown him out. But even she could not help but steal a small glance up at him as he walked past her, his body moving from side to side with a dominant gait.

As his eyes were scanning the room he made it look like he wasn't even doing it, as if he had corner vision to see things with no effort at all to do it. His expression appeared to be either plastered with boredom or a soft dark brooding, she couldn't really tell. There was an uneasy slow burning anger there just below the surface just waiting to spill over. He was intense and silent, his jaws clenching slightly.

For a moment it seemed he had acknowledged her looking at him but perhaps she was simply imagining things. A heat flushed over her cheeks and she looked back down into her textbook once more pretending not to notice or perhaps simply to hide her face from him and his feral gaze.

Daring to look up a few minutes later at her friend to exchange her nervous glance with an excited one from Nikki she saw she was grinning from ear to ear.

Mandy mouthed the words: "NO." because knew what her friend would do next and that it was only a matter of time. She could never contain herself, that excitable school girl part of her always switched on, when it came to cute boys. Especially NEW cute boys.

The other guys in class were still goofing around taking advantage of the momentary distraction and Mr Watkins cleared his throat a

couple more times before returning to what he was saying. He had to quiet them all to introduce their new class mate.

"Class, this is William Har-" He started to introduce him when the boy spoke up suddenly once he made himself comfortable in his seat behind Mandy. He had a deep and firm voice, almost husky like a low rumbling whisper. Tina in the front row looked back at the new student and rested her cheek on her hand sighing. She swooned looking at him starry eyed and obviously enjoyed the sound of his baritone voice as he spoke.

Tina looked him up and down batting her eyelashes flirtatiously and it made Mandy sigh as she scribbled on her notepad not wanting to see it.

*'Here we go again'* Mandy thought to herself.

All the boys wanted Tina but very few were lucky to catch her interest in return.

"Billy. William is for pretty boys. Just call me Billy." His firm stare at the teacher made poor Mr Watkins fumble his words and he took back his error graciously.

"I apologize. Billy, then. As you insist. Class, this is Billy Hargrove. A new student from California. Say hello and make him feel welcome please. Moving from this far away can be rather frustrating and stressful so I expect you all to be mature, welcoming, and respectful."

"Oh, I'm sure they will be more than welcoming." Billy said in a flattering sultry tone most likely directed at the ladies and not the other guys in the class. The girls seemed to go crazy at hearing his name for the first time some of them being more obvious than others.

Amongst the whispers, murmurs, and the discreet passing of notes, Billy seemed to care less what people thought of him or his entrance although he was obviously eating up the attention on the inside with how his posture was displayed. Some were too afraid to say anything and just admired him from afar while others, like Tina, were bold enough to whisper to their friends next to them or behind them while checking out the new eye candy.

Nikki was one of them. She was all aglow and her face said she was smitten with him.

*No, not her too. Traitor.*

Although she hadn't expected anything less from Nikki, she knew how she was. Mandy sat there stifling the urge to scream and take off out of the classroom to get away from it all. It was just too much to bear, especially every time Billy Hargrove landed his dangerous powerful blue eyes on her and wouldn't look away.

She kept whipping her head back forward towards the board each time he caught her looking behind her shoulder slowly at him. Mandy stayed strong not showing what she was thinking and feeling, not even knowing what she was feeling if anything at all besides irritation, and maybe that confused him or ticked him off. She wasn't playing the game and stroking his ego with her eyes.

The girls attention on him undoubtedly made some of their boyfriends uncomfortable so a few of them had a bit of a jealous scowl on their faces. But as soon as he looked in their direction, they wiped the look off and turned their stares away not wanting any confrontation with him. He looked like the kind of rough and tumble guy to not hesitate should some poor soul try to make an angry move at him. He definitely looked like a scrapper and a troublemaker. His body was powerful and in great shape. His arms and legs and hands strong in appearance. But it was his hardened face that made people nervous around him.

Eventually not caring anymore getting all the attention he could get his fill of for the time being, he began yawning into his fist and stretched his long legs out under his desk. When Mr Watkins wasn't looking he began scratching something, maybe his initials, into it with a small pocket knife he boldly produced from his jeans pocket.

A sudden tap to Mandy's shoulder from some guy next to her made her turn in the direction of Nikki beyond him. She noticed a folded piece of paper being passed to her using the guy as a middle man to deliver it. He handed it to her quickly and quietly. Slowly opening it up she read it from behind her text book so Mr Watkins wouldn't notice.

It read:

"Holy shit, girl. Did you see those gorgeous eyes? And those powerful muscles! De-lic-ious! He is smoking hot! You better talk to him, I saw him looking at you. Do it before someone like Tina makes her move cuz she is gonna be all over that. Please? Do it for me? YOU NEED THIS. Don't be shy, Mandy!"

It had a goofy smiley face at the end of it and when Mandy looked over at Nikki she quickly looked away when the teacher suddenly told her to get rid of her gum. Spitting it out and wrapping it in paper she put it in her pocket sheepishly while sneaking looks at the new boy then back to Mandy. He didn't seem to really notice as the class droned on and he rapt his fingers on his desk only half paying attention while staring out of one of the classroom windows sighing gruffly.

Mandy crumpled the note looking at her friend shaking her head 'no' which made Nikki eyeroll and give a 'why not?' look to her. She slipped the evidence laden note into her bag quickly before she could be outed for passing notes in class.

Mr Watkins was known to put students on the spot and make them read them out loud to the class to embarrass them and at the same time teach them a lesson not to pass personal information around during school.

Nikki was relentless. She passed one more to her through the same guy and made cross eyes at her playfully sticking out her tongue which made Mandy give a small soft laugh. It erupted from her despite the seriousness of her adamant reply to the negative on Nikki's advice.

The next note read:

"Come on. You know you are interested. You've never had a boyfriend and this guy is exotic to the max. I am going to hook you two up or else I will wind up trying to jump on that so if you don't that will be on you, your loss!"

Looking back to her friend with a quiet whispering laugh she wrote

back to her on the note from behind her text book and passed it to the guy to give to Nikki. Her friend opened it up and read it eagerly while Mr Watkins droned on reading the passage from the first chapter of Romeo and Juliet, still unaware of their secret correspondence.

She had replied:

"Go for it. He's all yours. YOU better hurry up before Tina takes him."

Nikki got frustrated that Mandy wouldn't go after this insanely gorgeous guy and right before she was going to pass another note, Mr Watkins slightly caught on and heard their giggling.

"Something funny, Miss Hawkins? Miss Valentine?" He was looking right at them with his glasses lowered and hanging smugly over the bridge of his nose, book in hand as he paused.

"N-no, Sir. Nothing at all. Just had something caught in my throat is all." Mandy's lame answer made a few of the students titter with amusement but Mr Warkins bought it and told her to go into the hall for a drink of water from the fountain.

"No, I'll be okay. Really." She wanted to die right there on the spot and covered her face with her eyes going wide out of embarrassment. Nikki had quickly shoved the note she recieved in her pocket so Mr Watkins wouldn't see it and tried to put on her best 'I'm innocent' smile for him. He went back to reading to the class after a few seconds.

Just a few minutes later, Mandy could feel it again. The new guy searing the back of her head and neck with his gaze, hot and intense and it gave her goosebumps. The hairs raised up on the back of her neck when she felt him lean in close over his desk and whisper behind her just within ear shot.

"Anything interesting in those notes about me, princess?" His voice was low and temptation coated it but she did not turn around to face him. Her eyes went wide with a breath caught in her throat and she was thankful that he could not see her expression on her face at that moment. But he must have noticed how she straightened up in her



posture and got somewhat rigid at the feeling of his warm breath so close to the nape of her neck.

*God, he is so arrogant! Really. To even assume the notes were about him, even if they were, that was just so... he's so...*

She couldn't finish her thought but he tapped at the back of her chair with his fingertips wanting an answer. He laughed when she didn't give it, a low rumbling chuckle. She didn't dare turn around even once. She simply stared straight ahead pretending to listen to Mr Watkins as if she didn't hear him at all.

Sadly, no matter how Mandy tried to focus, she could not remain concentrated on Shakespear today of all days when trouble walked into her classroom. It was making her want to take up that offer and go for the fountain just to escape Billy and cool herself off splashing it on her flushed face.

This was odd because of two reasons. The first one being that she LOVED English class and reading the classics. Nothing ever took away from that joy. And the second, she had never before a day in her life zoned out during one of her more passionate subjects nor been so distracted in all the years of going to this school.

She kept her back straight and closed her eyes in part frustration when she heard him give one last chuckle behind her then hearing him lean back into his own seat feeling his heated stare for a little while.

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## **2. The Invitation-Sanctuary Interrupted**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

### **Chapter 2 - THE INVITATION - SANCTUARY INTERRUPTED**

#### **Summary:**

Her friends try and talk her into attending a pool party. She NEVER goes to parties. The peer pressure is on for her to grow and come out of her shell, but she doesn't feel ready, even though they all made a plan to wear her down until she accepted.

She is avoiding the new boy as much as possible but he is EVERYWHERE as are his mindless female followers and worshippers.

She decides to spend her lunch break in the school library, a place she knows is her safe sanctuary, and to help Mrs Bannister as a part time librarian's assistant. Her friends surprise her with lunch in the library and Mrs Bannister okays it if they are quiet and use one of the study rooms. She's like a crafty Ninja!

Tucker and Alex's crazy antics are fun while Nikki wants to discuss only one thing ever: BOYS.

When Tucker asks for alone time to talk to Mandy he gets aggravated when he's not given the chance to say what he wants to say and storms off. This confuses all of them, Mandy the most, but she thinks she knows why he is acting so weird. It really puts a damper in their party.

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When the bell finally rang, and her nerves had settled a bit as the distracting boy sat silent for the remainder of the class, she sat there waiting for him to be the first to leave. She did not want him approaching her let alone talking to her and felt like he wouldn't as long as Nikki was nearby talking her ear off at her desk.

Sure enough after sitting for a few moments, he got up without a word slinging his denim jacket over his shoulder and barely acknowledged Tina when she said hello to him on his way out. She followed him like a lost puppy regardless.

If anyone had a shot at hooking up with him here in this school it would be her. Mandy had nothing against Tina, she was sweet. She had never done anything cruel to her, not like Carol and the other popular girls.

Nikki always felt bad because she was torn between hanging with them but also since Mandy was her best friend of four plus years, she had to be loyal to her as well. Nikki wasn't afraid to be seen with her, just didn't know what to do or say whenever Carol and the others were ragging on her. She tried to stand up for her and Tina even did a few times as she was a neutral popular girl that didn't look down on anyone. Mandy admired her for that.

As she watched, she saw Tina lightly touch his shoulder before they exited the classroom together, Tina following him hopelessly out into the hall. He felt the touch and looked back at her but he didn't seem to mind too much and allowed her to follow. Mandy really hoped Tina would be careful with that guy. She would hate to see her get hurt. He looked like the type to stomp on a girls heart or devour it

whole.

When Nikki and Mandy left the classroom and were in the hallway her friend immediately started firing questions and statements at her about what happened back there.

"Oh that was so close with the note! I almost ATE it to keep him from seeing it!" Nikki said laughing as Mandy almost dropped her books searching through her stuff in her bag.

They were standing at her locker and she had no idea why. Everything she needed was already in her bookbag so she figured she would just drop off her English textbook into her locker to make room for her new Biology one she would get soon.

She had her class schedule in her hand so she would know where her classrooms were. She had studied it a little bit before first period as they were talking about Billy being new to the neighborhood. That fun little conversation was what had made them so late to class in the first place. Emphasis sarcastically on 'fun'. She really just wanted to forget all about him and not discuss it at all but Nikki was persistent as usual

Mandy was lost in her schedule list reading what classes they stuck her with when she heard a familiar voice from down the hall. Deep. Gravelly. Seductive and slow. She already recognized it immediately.

As she looked down the hall not wanting to see who she knew was going to be there, she took in the sight of Tina and Billy standing at her locker talking with one another. He said something and Tina laughed putting her hand on his chest gently tapping it as if he was just the funniest guy in the entire planet. She was drawing her head back to show off her soft neck and shoulders to him. Her black curly hair was falling softly all around her face and her smile was radiant making her dark eyes sparkle.

He leaned in putting one hand on the locker getting close to her which made her instantly stifle her laugh and look up into his eyes speechless. He moved one hand out to touch one of her curls and lightly stroke her cheek. She looked like she was in heaven.

The whole display of it was just kinda sleezy to Mandy on the Hargrove boy's part. He was a shameless flirt who obviously preyed on girls using his good looks to wrap them around his finger.

Mandy could barely hear the conversation even if Tina's locker wasn't too far from her own and on the opposite side of the hall. Billy smiled at Tina seeing how easily amused she was while he leaned in to her as if he were going to kiss her cheek.

Mandy rolled her eyes and made a gagging gesture with her finger to the back of her throat and it made Nikki laugh.

"Wow... this guy is really getting to you, isn't he? I think you liiiiike him..."

She had said this in a sing song voice drawing out the word 'like' and Mandy shushed her with her putting her finger to her own lips. Nikki gave her a knowing look and Mandy didn't respond not wanting to even go there.

She didn't want to admit it to herself, or even to her friend, but she was slightly straining to hear the conversation between Billy and his newfound admirer.

Why did she care? Tina deserved happiness and was very pretty. So if Hargrove could give that to her then why should Mandy despise them and their connection for that? Tina was sweet and deserved someone to be with but she needed an equally sweet boy, not a walking talking hormone like this Billy guy. She just hoped she knew what she was getting herself into. Billy didn't seem anything less than a loose canon who constantly shifted his moods around.

She stared at the pair of them not sure what she was feeling inside but not liking a single second of it whatever it was for reasons unknown to her addled thoughts.

Suddenly Nikki was waving her hands in front of Mandy's face, her bangles jingling, seeing that she was far off again somewhere while staring at Billy and not paying attention. Nikki's metal bangles were clinking together noisily on her wrists in front of Mandy's face which made her snap out of it more than her friends voice did.

"Hellooooo! Earth to Mandy. Come in Mandy. Snap out of dreamland, you can visit Hargrove there later in your sleep! I need to talk to you about something important before the late bell for our next class rings." She said laughing and blowing another bubble, the loud pop making Mandy twitch.

She honestly didn't know why this boy set her on edge so much. She didn't even know the guy so why was she making all kinds of assumptions about him? So what if he was a flirt? Did that mean he was a bad guy just because of that? She didn't truly know.

Mandy kept zoning out watching Billy smile and put his other free hand on Tina's waist still pinning her to her locker touching her face and rubbing it with his thumb. Tina's smile was completely lost in him and she put one hand on his strong upper arm feeling his bicep over his denim jacket. He removed his sleeve of his jacket to let her feel it even better as it was exposed below his white muscle shirt. She made wide eyes at him and was clearly impressed.

"Huh?" Mandy said not tearing her eyes off of them but turning her head slightly towards her friend. Nikki gave her a smug little smile. It was a knowing smile and it burned Mandy up inside that she was using it on her like that. Finally she kept her eyes on her friend breaking her back and forth stare from Nikki to Billy.

"Shut it. Don't. Say. A word." Mandy gritted out through her teeth with her face feeling like it was on fire.

Nikki mocked zipping up her lips with her fingers but placed another piece of gum in her mouth and grinned on all the same.

Nikki changed the subject and started talking her ear off about some upcoming party at Steve Harrington's place. She heard most of it but then the details began to get fuzzy as Mandy faded in and out of paying attention to Nikki while watching the budding couple from down the hall.

Mandy watched Tina pull a pen out of the spiral wiring of her notebook and made like she was going to write it on a piece of paper and hand it to him. He stopped her and in a smooth move he offered his large hand to her instead insisting she write it there in order to

foster more contact between them. He knew what he was doing alright. Every move practiced and calculated. Tina loved taking his large hand in hers to write it down smiling like an idiot.

"... so yeah I was totally thinking you should come. All the cute guys will be there and you need some social interaction in your life, girl. Mandy? Hello, are you listening? Oh, goodness, I've lost you again..."

Tina smiled after writing her number and looked up into his eyes a complete mess in front of him. She played with her own curls nervously as his face stayed close to hers.

"I'm sorry... what?" Mandy looked away from Mr Perfect and his new lady to concentrate solely on her friend and felt ashamed for tuning her out so much over a creep like Hargrove. She also felt ashamed of spying on their intimate moment which should not have been on such open display. Mandy felt wrong staring at them.

Nikki sighed putting her hands on her hips, her wrist bangles furious in their sounds, and started over.

"Get your head out of the clouds, Mandy, seriously. I said Steve Harrington is hosting a pool party at his parents house this weekend because they are away on a business trip. Lucky him, right? Like, God, when are they not away? They're ALWAYS gone and I want... no... I NEED you to go with me. I am NOT going to this thing alone without you."

"You'll have Tucker and Alex, though." Mandy pointed out grinning knowing she got her there.

Nikki pouted and stamped her feet lightly. She was being adorably adamant about this. Mandy thought on it. She did have a pep talk with herself to spend more time with her friends this year. As long as Hargrove wouldn't be there she wouldn't really mind too much. But she was nervous and afraid to go at the same time. She was always awkward in groups and gatherings that weren't just her and her close friends.

"It's not the saaaaaaame. I don't want to go out to a party with only our guy friends, as much as I love them dearly, mind you. I need

some serious girl time with you, Mandy, just us girls. And no, before you say it, Nancy, Tina, and Carol do not count. I spend almost every waking moment with them when I'm not hanging with you. Please... pleeeeeeaaase?"

Mandy sighed at the sounds of her friend begging her. She really did not want to go. She remembered her pep talk to herself in her room earlier this morning and it was really getting to her. This was her chance to say yes and be spontaneous breaking all her normal rules in her life. Mandy weighed it and thought for a few moments.

Nikki's pouting face made her feel so guilty. Maybe she should go. But then she would feel so out of place even with her friends there beside her.

And besides, she would have NOTHING to wear and she was NOT putting on a swim suit and going into the pool. There was no way she would bare her skin in front of a bunch of random guys and strangers. She just wasn't confident enough for that.

Even if she wanted to she didn't own a nice enough looking one for a party just her trips to the community pool which would make everyone there laugh at her. She hadn't bought a proper fitting lovely new swimsuit since two years ago. Her old one was getting tattered and snug.

As if reading her mind, Nikki grinned seeing the gears turning inside Mandy's head and was three steps ahead of her, as per usual.

"I have this super cute sexy black bikini you can wear that I just bought in case you said yes. It would look so good on you, Mandy, I promise. Please say you will go with me? I bet Steve and Nancy would be absolutely thrilled to see you! I will even do your hair and some heavy duty but nice looking waterproof makeup for you. Mmmkay? Kay?"

"Nikki... I'm not much for parties. I don't even like to go to BIRTHDAY parties. You know this. How long now have you been trying to get me to go to one?"

Nikki blew a bubble and put a defiant hand on her hip. "Uh, like,



since forever ago? Like, since the moment we first met and became friends in the fifth grade?"

"Exactly. And how many times have you had me agree and go with you?"

Mandy sarcastically smiled at the adorable way her friend always tried to sucker her into going and hooking up with some guy. It was always about finding Mandy a boyfriend. She was beginning to think Nikki was simply desperate to also find a guy so she and Mandy could take their boytoys on a double date just for kicks.

"Zero. Because you don't have a single fun bone in your body. C'mon, pleeease? I'm begging you. Just this once? Besides, Tucker and Alex are coming too and with me, Nancy, and Steve there as well it's not like you will be alone and not know anyone there. I will make you SOOOO drop dead gorgeous. I mean, no offense, not like you aren't already my sweet. But I can make a few... adjustments."

Her friends smile was infectious. It was hard to say no to her big blue sparkling eyes so full of life and freedom. Something stirred within her and she felt maybe she did need this after all.

Her head had been fighting with her heart. The usual tango of 'do' and 'do not' with 'maybe' never coming in between to break it up and settle it. While her head was saying 'no, don't go, you will just make a fool of yourself and be awkward all night' her heart was moved to be bold, adventurous, daring even, and determined to do this.

There was also something about the way Billy was getting under her skin, how he had stared at her while she was walking. How he had breathed down her neck in class. And now how he was openly flirting with Tina in the hall occasionally looking her way with a smug look on his face. It made her feel like had an indirect influence on her decision too, and she didn't know why.

His presence seemed to make her feel small and out of control so she wanted to take some of that power back for herself and BE in control again. Be in charge and not be timid or afraid. She wanted to direct her own life and make her own choices. Not be held back while worried about what others would think say or do if she chose

happiness for herself. She wanted to be more like Tina, Nancy, and Nikki.

She hated that she had never been to one single party all her life while keeping herself hidden away from the world because of other's teasing and cruelty. She could feel a slight rebelliousness gripping tight onto her as his blue eyes locked with her green ones from afar as if daring her to do it.

It was taking a hold of her and her curiosity was mounting by the second. The very prospect of having a good time and not being cooped up at home was indeed a temptation long time coming and a nagging need to for once in her life explore and let loose.

She looked to Billy giving his number back to Tina and still smooth talking her as he now wrote his on her hand. When he happened to glance over in her direction as Tina laughed closing her eyes she felt something inside of her snap. A resolve to be wild and impetuous.

His feral gaze drove her to this moment of clarity within herself. She longed to feel free and confident like Tina was. To not be afraid, to laugh, to live, to have someone want or desire her and talk to her. She was tired of hiding and running. Despite this, when Billy looked at her, she hid behind her locker door and pulled Nikki closer to her hiding them both from his stares.

"O-okay. I'll do it. I will go. You win this time, Nikki. I will go. But you have to promise me something."

Nikki bounced up and down excitedly clasping her hands together eager to hear the condition she was about to give as her blonde hair was bouncing and whipping around everywhere.

"Anything. Tell me!" She said eagerly a grin from ear to ear.

"You CANNOT pressure me into talking to any boys. That is final. I want to choose that for myself. My own personal decision. Agreed?"

Nikki put her hand up like she was swearing on the Holy Bible in court and looked super serious but it couldn't mask her bubbling enthusiasm at having finally convinced her to come along.

"Deal. I won't pressure you to talk to any boys. I will MODERATELY... "encourage" you to speak to at least ONE boy?" She grinned wickedly at slightly altering the deal after her own fashion.

Rolling her eyes but laughing with Nikki she sighed. It was because she obviously heard what Mandy said but had to twist it just a little bit. A compromise.

"Okay. Fine. ONE guy. But please do not pick Hargrove, if he is there and shows up, alright? I have some weird vibes about him and I just want to steer clear. Besides, it seems he's wrapped up in Tina now so hopefully she will keep him busy."

Nikki laughed and smirked at her while poking Mandy in the stomach when she had mentioned weird vibes over Billy.

"Could those weird vibes be the beginning flutters of a budding attraction to him? Do you feel the butterflies over Billy Hargrove, Miss Hawkins?"

Her friend playfully nudged her and Mandy made a 'hell no' look at her with her hand on her hip. Nikki moaned with slight frustration but rolled her eyes and shook on it when she put out her hand to make her seal the deal with her own compromise added.

"Okay. Deal. I won't try to hook you up with Hawkin's new infamous bad boy. But I will choose SOMEONE for you to talk to at the party. MY pick, if I find a good one, so don't even think of backing out if it happens."

Mandy sighed at this and closed her eyes wanting to bang her head on her locker.

"I will find you a man, Mandy. That is my new sole mission in life. My eternal quest!"

That was her friend, Nikki the passionate match maker. She had tried to set her up once before with a boy but Mandy chickened out and didn't know what to say and simply walked away to hide leaving the boy laughing at how shy and ridiculous she was.

"I also promise that it won't be his Royal Hotness in case you get all

weird and start talking nonsense to him single handedly undoing all my hard work of making you look good."

Nikki teased and grinned at Mandy waiting for her to explode at her statement. Once it finally sunk in Mandy looked visibly taken aback and confused as to what she meant by that.

"Weird? Nonsense? What do you mean get all weird?"

Mandy was trying to understand what she meant by that as Nikki laughed and began saying random silly stuff in a mocking imitation of her. The kind of stuff she had heard her say many times throughout the school year whenever a guy took notice of her and had approached.

"No silly pickups like this... 'Hey there... uhhh... so do you like books? What's your favorite novel? I love to read books. Did I mention I love books and to read them?'

Mandy blushed. She thought of it as an adorable quirk, maybe even a defense mechanism that kept her out of trouble, but Nikki shredded her mercilessly on it thinking it was hilarious to her. But the truth was inescapable. Mandy did NOT know how to socialize or talk with other people. Especially to high school boys.

Nikki continued mocking as Mandy peeked around her locker door seeing that Billy and Tina were still there getting in some major face time.

For a brief moment she went wide eyed and then disappeared back behind her locker door. He had looked back at her to stare with a smirk as if he could hear every word while juggling listening to Tina gush at him trying to pay attention to her too.

She was trying hard to focus more on Nikki's teasing and not to think about him and Tina talking to each other on the phone later saying God knows what or planning whatever together. She turned back to her friend who was still making fun.

"Or how about this one? 'So, ummm... are you prepared for the English finals?' Oh, Mandy, darling, someone needs to teach you how

to carry on a legit conversation!"

She teased with a bright sparkle in her eye. Mandy flustered listening to it but peeking back over she saw that thankfully Billy was no longer looking in their direction. Tina was in heaven as his full attention was on her. God, they needed to get a room.

As Nikki mocked her, Mandy gently shoved her with her hip and closed her locker up once it was finally safe to do so.

"Okay, I do NOT sound like that..." she defended herself but rather poorly knowing it was somewhat true.

"Yes you do, oh my God, yes you do! I swear I am not making this up. You CAN'T make up stuff like this, it's golden!"

After playfully shoving each other they both jumped when Alex and Tucker ran up behind them and scared the living daylights out of them with a loud greeting and clapping their hands on their shoulders.

"Hey! Fancy meeting you two strangers here!" Alex grinned while Tucker was slightly breathless from the run over.

"So... did you... talk to her... about it... yet?" Tucker said in between breathlessness from his fast jog over to them. He put a hand up on Alex's shoulder to steady himself as he leaned over catching his breath.

Mandy folded her arms, Alex looked clueless, and Nikki chewed on her gum furiously knowing she was busted trying to look everywhere else except at Mandy.

"Oh come on, seriously you guys? You all planned this?" Nikki gave up and threw her hands up in the air nodding while also laughing it off as if it wasn't a big deal.

Tucker was feigning complete ignorance but very badly as if scripted ahead of time.

Alex gave him a slight kick to his ankle making him grab it and rub it then glare at him for it.

As Nikki came clean about them having formed a plan to each whittle her down slowly until she could resist no more and accept the invitation Mandy saw Billy take Tina's hand raising it to his lips and kissing it gently making her blush horribly giggling all over the place.

"Look, it doesn't matter. As long as HE'S not going to approach me and talk to me if he's going to be there."

Looking back Billy was turning to leave arm in arm with Tina. Mandy didn't look over in that direction again once she saw that Tina and Billy were gone, having walked off with their arms intertwined together leaving the halls.

The bell rang shortly after and they all started walking to their next class. Mandy noticed Billy and Tina were gone now. It was safe to walk the hallways between classes once more and breathe easy.

Tucker and Alex joked the whole way there while Nikki picked up on how quiet Mandy was being now. She had tried to reassure her shy friend that even if he did show up to the party, they could always leave the immediate room and go outside or claim going to the bathroom to 'powder their noses' thus having an excuse to evade him.

Well, she could TRY at least to avoid and evade. Billy looked like the King of going after whatever or whoever he wanted and getting it effortlessly. So if he chose to pester her, there was no telling if she could get him to stop or go away.

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Time went by painfully slow the first day. The time gods were toying with her seeming to slow everything down to a crawl making the day last longer than usual. This was most likely because Mandy felt listless, maybe even slightly paranoid as she went through her day. Because of this her sense of the ebb and flow of time, of continuity, made her feel almost like she was having an out of body experience.

She was panicking at the simplest of things because not only had she agreed to go to the party, which just wasn't like her at all, but also because of the Hargrove boy practically living in her brain constantly while taking up residence there and kicking out all her other

thoughts but ones about him.

The clock was taking its sweet time tick on closer to lunch break so that Mandy could relax and get some solitude in the library. She needed some peace and quiet and not feel so uptight and stressed out. Not only was she struggling to adjust to a new schedule, her new classrooms, and new teachers, but she was also slightly paranoid with every hallway she walked down, every class she first walked into, and every pair of foot steps she heard behind her.

Everywhere she went she dreaded running into the blue eyed boy from California. She was praying she would not run into him around the campus or see him in any single one of her other classes. To her relief, so far the only one she had with him was homeroom English with Mr Watkins and that was bad enough.

Mandy could still feel the uneasy feeling she felt sitting in front of him. The feeling of just somehow knowing he was looking at her and staring with what she would imagine to be that lopsided boyish grin he had on his face earlier.

Her thoughts seemed to drift fading in and out unable to be anchored to anything as she got through second and third period classes. She was mentally exhausted and on high alert. Then, finally, time showed her mercy and moved on to her favorite time of the day.

Lunch break. In her mind she was waving the white flag begging for an end to all her troubled thoughts and asking for peace.

Mandy felt bad around this time because she always felt pressured to have lunch with Nikki, Tucker, and Alex in the cafeteria almost every day last year. That place was swarming with all the cliques and groups of the school, some not so nice, some nicer than others, some completely irrelevant, and it really amped up her anxiety to be there.

She had a lot of bad experiences in the past from being bullied and harassed openly without cause as she primarily kept to herself when her friends weren't with her. Milk dumped down her shirt. Tray being knocked out of her hands. Random jerks cornering her with their buddies to call her names and or say inappropriate things to her and about her. She would shake inside wishing she had the courage to

fight back or to talk to someone about it but she never did. So she would just be forced to take it and try to keep her stride.

Her friends expected her to be there but she always made it clear to them she MIGHT show up to have lunch with them there, never promising to. She could never really promise them that as her sacred spot was calling to her and she would heed it's siren call above all else. Somehow Mandy just always managed to gravitate towards the Hawkins High library no matter what was going on in her life or during school.

She ultimately decided to avoid the cafeteria it at all costs and was happy she found the library to retreat to instead. She was also happy she had met someone like Mrs Bannister, the sweetest and most hilarious spry old librarian ever who shared her same love of books and of a zen like silence while enjoying them.

Every year she would sign up and offer to work there as a sort of temp Librarian to help students find, check out, and return their books. While Mrs Bannister didn't like her loud and rowdy friends too much, she had grown to admire and respect Mandy since she was not only the shy quiet type but also had an enormous love for reading almost anything she could get her hands on from her favorite subjects.

Each time she had gone there Mrs Bannister had recommended a new book from the genres she knew Mandy loved. Mandy guessed she liked that she handled them delicately even when turning the pages and never dog eared them while reading or got any food or drink on them. So she permitted her to eat in one of the study rooms in the back while reading if she didn't need Mandy's help for the day.

She often spent time in the quiet corners of the library or one of the study rooms to relax in while catching up on some of her favorite authors and listening to music. A wide vareity of tastes she was very keen to, but her special private interests she would go to the used book store in town to get and read at home. Such as her little secret love of romance novels.

So mostly, as the lunch break ticked on in perfect silence and bliss, Mandy could be found curled up with her favorite book whether it be



in a quiet little room, or on a soft comfortable couch, and even at the very desk where she helped Mrs Bannister out with keeping track of the books going in and out as well as new orders.

She briskly walked in to her special place of peace and comfort with a huge excited grin, and set her bags down on the front desk. She watched as Mrs Bannister was busy sorting books on a rack her back turned to her. But as soon as Mandy made herself known, she greeted her with both surprise and yet expectancy to see her there again this year.

The woman was huddled over organizing when Mandy cleared her throat gently and affably, giving a small smile, her eyes lit up, when the elderly librarian turned to realize she was there.

"Oh, Mandy, my dear! What a nice surprise! So good to see you again. My, how you are growing up with each year that passes, I hardly recognized you! Have you come to sign up again as a temp this year?"

"Yes, Mrs Bannister, I would absolutely love to. I wouldn't have missed this place for the whole world. I'm actually doing really well. How have you been?"

She gave a sigh of content and asked if she needed help with the books she was currently working on. Mrs Bannister happily obliged and allowed her behind the counter to help with the books that needed to go back onto the shelves even before officially signing up. She just knew her that well. They had a very comfortable friendship and it was different from her connection with kids her own age.

Mrs Bannister thought of Mandy as wise and beyond her age so it was easy for them to talk about things she normally couldn't with hormonal teenagers. She also often came to Mrs Bannister for advice. She was like the grandma she never had but always wanted.

To everyone else she was gruff around the edges with a sassy old lady attitude and soft inside, but to Mandy she practically let her have the run of this place out of sheer trust and respect knowing she would never do anything bad. Good girl perks she supposed.

They made small talk as she sorted from genre to alphabetical in order to prep them for return to their home resting place on the shelves. Most of them were Science and History books with a few from the Mythology sections and those were locations Mandy knew very well.

"I've been just fine, sweetheart. Don't you worry about this bag of old bones. How was your summer? Did you do anything exciting during your summer break?"

Mandy thought hard about what to say. In all honesty it wasn't really too different from her last summer break. It was a blur of mostly caring for her brother, reading, and talking with her friends over the phone, hanging out at each others houses, or having sleepovers sometimes with Nikki or Nancy. They didn't care if they were in high school, sleepovers were still a thing.

There was the Hawkins 4th of July Carnival at the Roane County Fairgrounds hosted by the Mayor each year but other than that she spent most of her days idly lazing about with her favorite reads or went swimming at the local community pool to keep her figure from slipping.

Thinking back on all of this visualizing and looking at all of it as if written on paper it would have been a very short paragraph in her life and not chapters and volumes like everyone else's were filled with. Mandy's book was still being written, slowly, but she just guessed the fates had writers block not knowing what to do with her grande arc just yet.

She shrugged and ignored Mrs Bannister's somewhat sad look on her face which she quickly replaced with a soft smile at Mandy. She patted her on the shoulder softly and adjusted her reading glasses looking at her with her aged brown eyes. Even an elderly woman apparently had a more exciting life than her, she thought humorously, and laughed shaking her head.

"It was wonderful regardless, Mrs B. I had a lot of fun don't worry. How is Mr Bannister doing? Last I heard he was getting along well enough, and I know its been a while since I've visited you both, but I remember you telling me he was having difficulties."

A look of concern spread over Mandy's face and although Mrs Bannister tried to reassure her and play it down a little, she could tell Mr Bannister wasn't getting much better. His health had taken a nose dive at some point last season due to his age and that was another reason why she came to help her with the library since his wife had a lot on her mind and on top of that him as an unwell husband to care for.

Some nights Mrs Bannister would even trust her with the keys to lock up and secure the place before leaving the school grounds to go home to care for him sooner. Some days Mandy would come visit them at their home and sit to talk with them. It really brightened up their day to have a youth like her in their lives that cared deeply for them.

They liked that Mandy wasn't like most of the other high school girls who were too self absorbed in their own goings on and social lives that they didn't care too much for other people other than themselves. Mandy was a very selfless person, due to things from her past she often did not want to really talk about, and she was deep and affectionate. Kind and giving. Almost like a grand daughter the Bannisters never were able to have due to complications for having children. It just never happened. So Mandy was a Godsend.

"Oh, well, he is doing as well as can be expected, dear. We would love to see you and have you come visit us as often as you would like. I will even bake some of my famous cookies you love so much. That would be a grand time, yes?"

Mandy smiled and nodded but inside was deeply worried for her and her husband. How long until she would come home or wake up one day to find he had passed? She dreaded that day but would be there for her as much as she possibly could no matter what.

Mrs Bannister gave a soft light laugh, hiding her pain, that matched her fragile appearance and personality that she was deep down inside, and left Mandy to it. Since she already knew where everything was and had worked there before, she didn't have to explain much to her other than new orders of books that were coming in and how to sign for them and allocate them into the catalogue and the index that was stored on the computers.

"You take it easy Mrs B, I've got this under control. No worries." She smiled and finished her sign up sheet then turned to look at the new books. She picked one up and cracked it open gently flipping the pages fast with her fingertips then placed her nose along the inside of the spine to breathe it in. She always loved how a fresh book with nice clean pages freshly printed had smelled.

Mrs Bannister chuckled as she watched her do this before going back to her own tasks.

"You're a good sweet girl, Mandy. Don't ever let anyone tell you any different."

Mrs Bannister knew of some of the bullying Mandy had been subjected to the past three years. It was actually her that had chased off one that was bothering her and brought her inside the library getting her a cup of hot cocoa and just talking with her about it. Mandy never opened up to anyone about it, not even Nikki and the gang. It was then the arrangement they shared now had been made for her to help run this place at lunch and always able to come to her should she run into any trouble.

With a friendly wink to her she left to go take care of her share of the work while leaving Mandy to help clean and straighten up the front desk and input the new books with their locations putting the proper sticker markings on the spines of them and stamping the insides of them as the school's property.

She would do as much as she could before the first warning bell for lunch to be over would ring. Then she would sit and read in one of the rooms and indulge in her music on her walkman if she had time to before saying goodbye and going back to the mad hustle of her classes. Mandy felt a little bad for not seeing her friends but hopefully they would understand.

Mandy had been checking out books for a student and sticking a due back slip of paper inside of it handing it to them, then returning to her novel when her friends had decided to surprise her with a visit. They stopped by to bring her a little something to snack on and to drink while working. Mandy was nose deep in a book when they arrived and Nikki strode up silently to sneak up on her with Alex and

Tucker in tow behind her grinning. Nikki tapped Mandy making her jump and then they all laughed.

"Oh... you scared me! Hey guys, what's up?" She grinned putting her book down shaking off the startled feeling happy to see them.

"So, this is where you've been hiding. As usual." Nikki teased and winked.

"Yeah, you know me. I just can't get enough of my books. Sorry I didn't catch up with you at the cafeteria, you know I don't like that place." She frowned but Nikki waved it off and Tucker and Alex didn't look upset at all.

"No worries, Mandy, we got you covered." Alex hoisted the lunch they brought and set it on the counter before her.

"I bet you now have a new reason for coming here, huh? Clever clever." Nikki grinned and resisted to pop her gum here. Mandy blushed back at her in response. Was she that easy to read? That transparent?

"Smart girl. Lucky for you his Royal Hotness will most likely never set foot in a place like this. He strikes me as the beautiful type blessed with all the looks who has a lot going on with his body and very little going on upstairs other than cars, partying, and women, if you know what I mean. But, oh god, that body though. Milk sure did his body good."

She winked and Mandy sighed not really wanting to talk about him but she guessed it was coming. Nikki knew her all too well. The only boys that would have access to her here would be the softspoken studious nerdy type within her range and league but boys like that had very little time for girlfriends and never really bothered her. If Hargrove was to come here, it was like to do so would be to taint her sacred space with something foreign to her world upsetting the balance and peace in her kingdom.

"How many more times are you going to mention him, Nikki? You're like a one track record I swear." Nikki stuck her tongue out and they laughed softly about it but she moved her hands to suggest they tone

it down a bit not wanting to disrupt the other students or upset Mrs Bannister. Where had she gotten off to anyway? That woman was like a silent assassin, you never saw her coming and then BAM there she was.

Mandy walked around from the counter and greeted her friends with a hug. As much as she loved them, they could be a bit loud in a place like this, most likely causing Mrs Bannister to pop up from her work or from behind shelves and firmly place a finger to her lips ordering them to be more quiet. It was always random and caught people off guard especially if she gave her award winning glare gluing them into their seats and making them shut their mouths instantly.

Tucker nudged Alex grinning and spoke his mind about how he felt when it came to reading and studying.

"I know I sure as hell haven't been here before. Never once set foot in this place and I got by with my grades and classes just fine." He said with a hint of pride in his tone for someone who hated to pick up a book and read.

Nikki threw a shot at him for fun.

"Yeah if you consider D's and C's as just fine." Giving a small giggle she enjoyed the look on his face when she mentioned it.

Tucker turned a bit red thinking back on the outing of his report card fiasco from last year which nearly made his parents go through the roof demanding he upped his grade or he would be grounded all summer. He somehow managed to get them back up in time which saved his bacon and his parents eased off of him so he could go to the arcade with Alex as planned.

Alex prepared his own shot to take at him and winked at Mandy and Nikki while he replied preparing to shred Tucker.

"Yeah because, according to the rumors, I heard you hooked up with Leslie Sanders and went to her house for a sloppy makeout... I mean... STUDY session. Sloppy kisses in exchange for better grades? Tsk tsk. Wow, Tucker, where is your pride, man? Leslie Sanders?"

Mandy knew Leslie, she was sweet. So she lightly punched Alex's arm making him mouth out his pain and give her an apologetic look for making Leslie seem like a less desirable person.

He then turned back to continue taunting Tucker and made kissy face noises at him pucking up his lips as if he were Leslie and Nikki almost died laughing. Mandy wanted to laugh too as it was funny but she nervously fidgeted trying to politely get them to simmer down a bit as they were starting to get too loud. They apologized to her and lowered their voices to whispers once more.

"I did not. I told you my parents hired me a private tutor. Leslie is so not my type. Ew."

Tucker looked at Mandy shamefaced but shrugging and shaking his head no as if he had no idea what Alex was talking about. He tried to hide his reddening face by looking away at something else after he had given her a mild expression of humiliated horror of Alex saying these things in front of her.

He shuffled his feet and it suddenly dawned on all of them that the rumours were actually true and he couldn't hide it anymore. He outed himself by his embarrassment.

"Dude. That's just... shameful." Alex stared at him with his face all scrunched up silly and Nikki tried to suppress a strong giggle.

Mrs Bannister, like magic and clockwork, popped out from behind a shelf while dusting it and was walking by eyeing her group of friends. She shushed them and placed her finger to her lips glaring which made all three of them stop and look serious down at the floor. Nikki bit her lip and Tucker and Alex put their hands in their pockets.

"Yes, Mrs Bannister..." they whispered to her softly in adherence and she went back to what she was doing quick as she had jumped out.

Mandy had seen the light wink she gave before disappearing letting her know she was only pretending to be grouchy and intimidating with her friends. It was part of her angry old lady act to keep the peace around here but deep down she was having fun with it. Mandy smiled at her.

"Alright guys let's go take a table in one of the reading rooms to eat. I'm sure Mrs B won't mind and if she does it'll be on me." Mandy smiled picking up the brown bag gracefully accepting the lunch her friends brought her.

When got in the room they turned on the light and closing the blinds locking the door behind them. Sitting down making themselves comfortable they all got their lunches out began to get their snack on.

Mandy opened the bag and lifted it's contents out slowly one at a time. A nice juicy apple, a salad in a plastic container with a fork and packet of ranch dressing, and a carton of chocolate milk, her favorite to wash lunch down with.

"Awww, thanks guys I really appreciate it." She immediately dove into the apple. It was sweet and juicy and red and Tucker couldn't help but notice how it made her look like Snow White as she ate it. He grinned.

"It was Tucker's idea, actually." Alex bumped into him as he said this and Tucker mouthed the words 'shut up' to him looking back to Mandy shaking his head no as if he once more had no idea what Alex was talking about. This made Alex roll his eyes and Tucker kicked his ankle from under the table in response.

"Well, we just figured that since you couldn't join us in the caf we would bring the caf to you and chill for a little bit." Tucker said quickly to recover from Alex outing him for his thoughtfulness of her. It was all over his face. Mandy hadn't missed it. She had just ignored and avoided it and let it go.

She knew how he felt about her. To be honest, Mandy always had a feeling that Tucker liked her as more than a friend, but they just never crossed that line. She didn't want to make their circle of long time friendship awkward or ruin the good thing they had going. She smiled shyly and focused on her apple not wanting to make him feel uncomfortable by staring into his eyes for too long.

She was happy they could do this. Perks of being the head librarians pet, she supposed. Since she never caused trouble, Mrs B would let her do most things here she wouldn't allow other students to get



away with and it felt awesome to have such a huge responsibility and sense of trust between them.

Mandy would never do anything to risk losing that trust either. She knew how easy it would be to do that if she ever did get a boyfriend. It was an intimate setting in here, especially with a lockable door.

She could only imagine how many other teens had come in here to makeout and it kinda made her feel gross to think about it so she shook it from her head and finished up her apple listening to her friends talk and laugh and tell her about their day in their classes so far.

They kept their voices low and felt the peace of this place with her, happy to just relax and talk for a few minutes with each other.

Instead of the breakfast club Mandy dubbed them the Hawkins Library Lunch Club and it made her giggle. She could see Tucker being sporto, Alex being the dork, her being the goth girl awkward in her own body and clothes, and Nikki being the princess. All they were missing was a Bender and they would be complete.

She laughed out loud at this and Tucker looked at her wondering what was on her mind. She shook her head as if to tell him not to worry about it. It was just funny to her how sometimes life imitated art and not the other way around.

It was nice to be here with them and she resolved to try and ask them to do it more often with her. Just so long as they weren't bothering other students who were trying to study and prepare themselves for their current curriculums and tests that would eventually filter in it shouldn't be a problem. Mandy thought of tests and quizzes and what they symbolized. Basically an image of them having to kiss goodbye the last remnants of freedom and their summer break. The pool party was actually sounding better and better to her now that she thought of it.

Her friend shook her out of her thoughts with a question aimed at her.

"So... what is it you exactly do here, Mandy?"

Nikki asked seated comfortably next to her and pulled out a home made neatly packed square piece of something wrapped in foil from inside her lunchbox. Nikki always had the coolest and most popular themed lunchboxes and no one thought it childish of her since she was up to date on all the trends and how to accessorize it with her current fashion.

Today she had a Tom Cruise Risky Business lunchbox complete with her idol in the t-shirt and shades. How it passed for PG in this school existing below the principal's radar was beyond Mandy.

Alex and Tucker pulled out their brown paper bags and looked through, often exchanging things they didn't want that came from home for things they coveted from each other's sacklunches in a trade.

This time Tucker swapped out his peanut butter, banana, and cheese sandwich for Alex's Bologna sandwich which was topped with pickles and mustard. They high fived each other and the girls stomachs turned at how they could eat stuff like that.

"What?" The boys said almost in unison then chowing down as the girls looked at them slightly turning up their noses but playfully.

Mandy answered her question while twisting her fork in the salad from the cafeteria and taking a small sip of her chocolate milk. She got a milk mustache and Nikki laughed pointing to it causing Mandy to wipe it off quickly and blush. She twirled her fork around in her salad some more while speaking low so as to keep her word to Mrs Bannister.

"Well, sometimes I organize books on the shelves because some kids put them back in the wrong spot. So annoying really. I dust and clean the shelves and replace books back on them when done. Other times I check in and out books for other classmates scanning their barcodes and putting the information into the computer that its returned or out. I also organize the periodicals and magazines, which is a pain sometimes because there are so many, you have NO idea. And when I am feeling particularly adventurous, I sit and read a book in a room like this one or listen to my walkman as I clean tables and chairs wiping them down then vacuuming. It's a good job and I like it

here."

She smiled and took a bite of her salad chewing softly and slowly. She was pleased with her exciting life and watched as her friends looked at each other and then back to her giving gentle teasing laughs and looks.

"My, my, Mandy Hawkins, what a dangerous and thrilling life you live, indeed"

Nikki laughed and dug into her mother's home made Lasagna after unwrapping it. It smelled wonderful. She offered a bite to Mandy but she turned it down rather opting for the healthier choice she was currently working on.

"I'd like to think I live a life of danger just as good as the international man of mystery, yes. Working in a library has it's pros and cons. Mrs Bannister is secretly my sidekick... she's an assassin. Like a ninja. And I'm the brains I guess. We fight crime together stopping one book thief or abuser at a time."

Mandy laughed at her little fantasy description of what she did here but Tucker and Alex exchanged glances about Mrs Bannister and had to nod and agree not being able to deny that one. She was definitely weird and good at vanishing then popping up out of no where, that much was a fact. The first time she did it, Alex almost had a heart attack and quickly walked out leaving the books behind he was trying to get. He had been talking to a girl flirting and had been a little loud so Mrs Bannister came out of no where and called him on it embarrassing him.

"Yeah, dude, she's a strange old lady. I believe it." He said biting into his sandwich and enjoying it thoroughly savoring the banana and peanut butter flavor.

"God, your mom makes excellent sandwiches. May I hire her as my personal lunch lady?" Tucker glared and punched his shoulder as a resounding wordless 'no' and Alex laughed rubbing it.

Nikki went right into the heart of what she was most interested in.

"So... any cute boys worth mentioning that actually come in here for you to feast thine eyes upon?"

*Ugggh, here we go again.*

Why was Nikki always so desperate to hook her up with someone? She didn't even want to humor that one with words. Mandy shook her head 'no' while drinking from her milk carton and Nikki slumped practically giving up on this girl.

"Well... maybe not cute to you, perhaps, I don't think you've ever thought a boy was cute. At least if you did you've never told me about it. But I might take a look around and give my honest opinion."

Nikki winked and finished off her food pulling out her chair and pushing it in to go outside of the room and explore.

While they had been talking about Nikki's favorite subject, the two boys were playing roshambo with one another out of slight boredom to amuse themselves and when Alex cheated, Tucker made a gun symbol with his hand and claimed to have blown away Alex's rock hand symbol. They got into a mild scuffle over who was actually the victor and one of them headlocked the other silently horseplaying but not getting too loud. They were like struggling mimes fighting over a street corner during a performance.

Mandy and Nikki laughed taken off guard by this for a moment but shrugged.

Mandy covered her mouth to stifle her laughter while watching then said okay to Nikki as she went to look for her heart's desire. Mandy stayed behind to finish eating hanging with her boys happily.

Mrs Bannister popped up outside the room in front of the window and eyed the boys. She made the 'I'm watching you' symbol with her hands to which both of them stopped dead in their tracks from playfighting. They were trying to act as if they were innocent and weren't doing anything at all. She stared them down, pretty sassy for an old lady then took off again. Mandy was laughing so hard it was difficult to contain it in her hands now.

"Uh oh... you've angered my sidekick, Silent Cobra. Prepare to face your doom." Mandy gave a mocking evil laugh talking about Mrs Bannister which made them laugh too and she shook her head grinning.

With Nikki gone, after a minute or so Tucker gave a weird look to Alex urging him to go bugger off and find something else to do or to help Nikki track down what she was looking for. Alex rolled his eyes and patted Tucker on the shoulder as if to say 'oh you poor, poor, kid' and abruptly left to go find their other friend who was most likely boy hunting checking off the cute ones like a shopping list. Alex opened the door and shut it behind him making a goofy kissy face at Tucker who glared at him until he left.

As they sat alone for a minute or so quietly finishing their lunch inside the room, Tucker finally spoke up breaking the silence between them.

"Hey, Mandy... there's something I've been meaning to ask you."

He nervously played with the sacklunch bag in front of him, balling it up and rolling it around on the table, and Mandy looked up from eating the last remnants of her salad. Sipping her milk she looked him in the eyes and he couldn't quite seem to finish what he wanted to say. Her green eyes held him captive and he nervously swallowed. She tried not to stare at him too much in case it was making it hard for him to get it out so she looked back down at her salad container. He stammered and lost his nerve trying to recover.

"What is it, Tucker? Is everything okay?" She asked, her big green eyes once more looking into his that somehow made him lose track of the question that had been burning in him all summer long. Unspoken and heavy between them.

"I.. uhh. I mean we... we've known each other for a long time. And... well, you're comfortable with me right?"

It was an odd question. Mandy wasn't fully sure what he was getting at, although she had an idea of what he meant by that. A somewhat deep down gut feeling and it was making her slightly nervous too. She felt it between them sometimes. Some unspoken thing. Mandy

never really liked it though because she didn't want to hurt him should the time come that he got bold enough to ask. Her heart hammered in her chest hoping this wasn't that time.

"Yeah... why?" Tucker sighed and looked up at the ceiling for a minute unable to look her in the eyes and fidgeting horribly.

"Tucker... just tell me what's on your mind." She couldn't bear the tension any longer. It was really bothering her now.

As soon as he was about to make his case, Alex and Nikki came back into the room in a semi heated debate over who was more handsome, David Bowie, Billy Idol, or Jon Bon Jovi? They were keeping it down but she could tell they were heavily invested in this and neither one wanted to admit to the other's solid opinion. Tucker's face looked crest fallen. And then slightly annoyed and angry.

"Jesus, guys. David Bowie, okay? There. Problem solved." Tucker picked up his things grabbing his trash from lunch and stood up walking over to the door to leave. He paused with his hand on the knob. He opened it and stormed out muttering to himself.

Nikki and Alex exchanged glances and then looked to Mandy who tried to look just as confused as they did. Playing dumb would be better in the long run.

"What's eating him?" Alex said and Mandy looked hurt because she knew the truth but didn't want to tell them. Ever. He had almost asked her to be with him and her stomach was in knots over it. She couldn't help but feel upset and sad over it at the same time. Things were changing as they got older and she hated change.

Nikki sighed and said simply, "Ugggh. Teenage boys. And they call us the hormonal ones."

With that they said their goodbyes and took off after hugging her and cleaning up their mess at Mandy's request. They waved and headed to their lockers early before lunch break would be over in a couple of minutes to get a headstart for Nikki's Math class and Alex's computer class. He was learning programming and computers because his dream was to be a video game creator and designer.

Mandy sat there stunned into silence in the study room. It bewildered her at the abrupt change in Tucker's behavior and his noticeable frustration. She was shook out of her thoughts when Mrs Bannister suddenly placed a hand gently on her shoulder from behind her in a gentle reassuring way.

"I think that nice young man likes you, my dear." She winked and went back to whatever it is she had been doing before suddenly appearing out of no where.

*Thank you, Mrs Captain obvious.*

Mandy thought dryly. How did Mrs Bannister know? Where was she hiding to have heard the conversation and had she had her eyes on them for a while now without them knowing it? Could she hear through walls like a superhero all of a sudden?

Mandy laughed at her mysterious ways. Before Mandy could turn around to protest or respond, she had already vanished, very spry for her age. Maybe she really was a ninja, Mandy thought entertaining herself a bit and trying to take her mind off Tucker.

She found she couldn't however. Now she had two boys on her mind to worry about. When did life get so complicated? She never had ANY boy troubles because she didn't invite boys that way into her life. Now here she was confused in her little world and not sure what to do about it.

In the next few minutes she finished up what she had left to do for Mrs Bannister and grabbed her book bag sighing as she walked to her locker wanting to stray behind a little bit. She was sort of confused about what to say to Tucker or what to do about his off behavior the next time she would see him. But deep down she knew she would eventually have to confront him and settle things so they could go back to being normal again and good friends.

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### **3. Locker Troubles-Keep It On The Court**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D**

**I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D**

**Enjoy.**

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

#### **Chapter 3 - LOCKER TROUBLES - KEEP IT ON THE COURT**

##### **Summary:**

**Mandy has a run in with Billy who corners her at her locker. She gets away from him and spends her last few classes fretting if they will wind up sharing some more of them hoping they won't. So far so good...**

**Her last class is P.E. Mandy HATES those gym shorts and dodgeball with a passion. Showers and a surprise from Nikki after winds up adding fuel to the fire and she seriously regrets agreeing to the pool party.**

**Tommy starts up his old crap with Mandy and a special someone gets crazy on the court. Steve's manly masculinity is ripped to shreds and he reflects.**

**.....**



On her way to her locker she was happy there was hardly anyone around leaving her to her thoughts while walking slowly her head down. That's why she took her time getting to her next class from the library so she could wait until most students had left the hallways in passing.

The bell would ring at any minute now so she had to hurry trying to wrestle herself from her distracting thoughts.

Turning to face her combination lock, she somewhat cursed under her breath and slowly tapped her forehead against the cool metal and groaned.

Mandy fumbled with the lock fully knowing she entered the correct numbers but the damn thing kept sticking on her randomly from time to time. This was the same difficult locker she had last year and she had asked to switch for another one but they said all had been full up and none were available. So she simply had to deal with it again this year.

Getting somewhat flustered she put her book bag down and put both hands on it trying to turn the combo lock and tug on it at the same time. Just as she was about to give up, she heard slow heavy and deliberate foot steps heading in her direction but she didn't want to look up just yet engrossed in fighting with the stupid thing.

If it was Tucker, he could just wait until she was ready to approach him. She wasn't ready to address it just yet and perhaps never would be. Perhaps he needed time to cool off and regain his composure. Maybe even apologize for how snappy he had been to all three of them in the library over his inability to say what he needed to.

"Tucker... please not now. Can we talk about this later after school? I'll call you, okay?" She sighed an exasperated sigh not meaning to sound nearly as cruel as it had come out when she said it and wanted to instantly turn and apologize.

"I think you've got the wrong guy, sweets. But if that's an offer, I will happily give you my digits."

The heavy slow sinful male voice came from behind her and she spun

to find herself face to face with the new boy, Billy Hargrove, standing right in front of her.

He had his jacket off and over his shoulder again showing off his muscled arms and chiseled torso. He stood there looking like some Greek God only in modern clothing from one of her mythology books she loved to read often. Adonis. Herculese. Or perhaps Narcissus would be more accurate. She instantly felt pangs of pity for Echo.

He stepped a little bit closer to her and her eyes widened as he got near enough to her that she could smell the faintest hint of cologne spray and his cigarettes on him. He was chewing gum knowing he was planning on getting close to her.

"Problems with your locker, princess?" He said smoothly as he moved like he was going to put his arms around her.

She froze unsure of what to do and stood still as her breathing got faster. He noticed and gave a flirtatious grin as he looked down into her eyes moving his up and down taking in the sight of her. He liked the way her long soft dark hair fell all around her face and shoulders and although her clothing wasn't like all the other girls it excited him leaving much to his imagination.

Instead of putting his arms around her he moved past her and pushed firmly on the locker, hitting it in just the right spot, to make it budge giving way. It popped open for her and he still kept his strong arm over her shoulder placing it on the locker door.

She couldn't do much of anything other than to mouth a soft 'thanks' to him which made him smile as he chewed his minty scented gum. He was also teasing it around his tongue on purpose as he watched her. She noticed his lips and his perfect teeth and the way he would run his tongue over them while looking at her.

She shifted uncomfortably and backed up a bit. His eyes were bold and made her feel trapped into looking at them with her own.

They stood like that for a moment, not moving an inch, with her unsure of what to say as he searched her face for what his next move should be. His thick long lashes accenting his icy blue orbs meeting

her sea green ones for what seemed like forever.

They held a hint of mischief and lust in them and she was instantly reminded of not only Narcissus but one of the handsome devilish rakes from one of her guilty pleasures, her romance novels, that she would read at home before bed that often got her heart and stomach a flutter. He had the same effect on her and she HATED it.

Trying to stifle that feeling she lifted her chin defiantly at him feeling brave enough to give him a look suggesting he should back up and give her space.

"I have a bubble you know. It's dangerously close to you popping it right now. Mind if I have some space to grab my things so I can get to class?" Her tone was icy and hostile.

He grinned down at her, his height making him slightly tower over her by a few inches, and she had to look up a bit to lock her eyes with his. She swallowed hard but didn't say a word and her reaction hadn't gone unnoticed under his constant smoldering stare.

She had no idea how he would react if she tried to dodge him and move or if she stayed trapped by him like a deer in headlights which might encourage him even more. He seemed to be enjoying the effect he was clearly having on her. Predator meets prey.

"I hope that's not the only thing of yours I would get to pop, Mandy." His sentence was dripping with sexuality and innuendo.

She grimaced at his sheer audacity of being vulgar with her, while using her name addressing her so formally as if they knew each other on top of things. This was not okay right now, especially since they had never formally met or been introduced to each other. Add to the fact that it was happening while she was all alone with him in the halls with no one to help her should he try to put his hands on her inappropriately, and it made things even worse.

"That was rather uncalled for. Please stand aside and let me go."

She was still being firm with him although her voice wavered slightly when she felt his breath tickle her face as he laughed down at her. He

was liking that she was resisting and telling him to stop.

*Damn it all. This fuckin' guy.*

Mandy often cursed in her mind things she wouldn't ever dare say or repeat out loud. She was raised proper, but her mind was her own and if she wanted to call him every filthy curse word or name in the book, then she would!

After a few moments of him looking her in the eyes he began to move his eyes down elsewhere taking her all in. Looking her up and down slowly as if appraising her he grinned even wider. She had suddenly wished she had kept her sweatshirt on instead of taking it off at lunch break to relax in the library.

Her top underneath was modest not showing cleavage but it was an open one hanging off both of her shoulders and silky soft to the touch. So it showed her pale skin of her neck, some of her chest, and the smooth round edges of her shoulders all free for the taking to his piercing and wandering gaze. Her sweatshirt was wrapped and tied with the long sleeves around her waist accentuating her hips and her figure so she quickly untied it and put it over her head slipping it back on. Her body was not on display for him despite what he thought.

With the way his eyes washed over her as she defied him by covering up, she felt both flattered and terrified. A strange mix of a feeling since whenever the other boys looked at her like that it didn't make her nearly as nervous as he did. The other boys she would ignore. He was impossible to ignore and her mouth went dry. He had a way of making her become PAINFULLY aware of herself around him and his presence so near her.

"Didn't really get to see much of you earlier. You should ditch your baggy hoodies more often. This look suits you better."

Oh and she bet he was just burning up inside at how she just covered herself too. Good.

When he stopped looking at her body he returned to locking his eyes with hers and waited patiently for her to make a move or say

anything in response. She was tongue tied at this point or simply past caring.

"Still want that number? I'm available tonight if you want."

He was baiting her. Urging her on to give him some sort of response. His face told her he thoroughly enjoyed doing this to her.

The same thing he did to Tina earlier only she was much more responsive and liked it. Mandy didn't. She guessed that was even more of a turn on for him. Damn her for having no choice but to be defensive shying away from him which was giving him exactly what he wanted in a bitter sense of twisted irony.

She recalled him successfully getting Tina's number earlier too while also giving his in exchange. It was at that moment that she found the strength to break his spell on her and to act out of sheer anger of his playboy mentality.

She decided her best course of action would be to shut him down before he got any wild ideas in his head about her and pushed the envelope even further. She was not Tina and never would be. She was not another girl in line to fall at his feet. This Echo would not pine for Narcissus.

"I'm sure you've got enough numbers in your little black book, Hargrove. Mine will not be added to the collection. You should go ask Tina about popping things. I'm sure she would love to have you open her locker for her."

The innuendos Mandy shot back at him made him laugh obviously entertaining him at how fiery she could be when backed into a corner. Fuck, he liked that too. So just what was she supposed to do?

Time for physical separation then.

She pushed past him and went under his arm grabbing her book bag and catching him off guard. She was deciding to take his crap no longer and he could only smile wider as he turned to watch her go while looking at her ass. It was obvious he was not taking the hint of her rejection and treated it like foreplay or her giving the green light.

He faked like he was hurt when she turned to look back at him with a glare, grabbing his chest like he was clutching his heart in mock pain about to collapse.

"Ouch. First blood. So you have claws after all. Well, if you change your mind and file them down a bit... I will be waiting. Eventually, you might learn to like me if you really tried to get to know me. See you around, Mandy. Soon I hope."

He smiled putting his hands in his jeans pockets leaning against her locker possessively and she realized she hadn't closed it to her horror in her haste to get away. Not wanting to deal with having to come back to where he was, she figured there was nothing he would want to take from it anyway. So she rushed off leaving it be to escape his watchful stare and would worry about it later.

Billy looked her up and down eventually laying his eyes on what he imagined to be lovely and shapely legs hidden underneath that long denim skirt she was wearing and imagined how she would look without all that material getting in the way. He sucked in a breath and gave a soft whistle to stir her up even more.

"In your dreams, Billy Hargrove. In your dreams." She shot back as she quickly kept walking with her book bag clutched in her arms, her pace desperate and brisk to escape his searing stare and cat calls.

She knew on instinct he was watching her as she left so she tried her best not to give him much of a show and yet she was still graceful in her departure. His ego obviously hadn't taken much of a hit from her scathing words or her obvious body language enough to shake him off.

She had hoped he wouldn't read too much into the fact that she recalled his full name and cursed herself for even using it. To committ it to memory the way she did had appalled her and shaken her to her very core. It most likely told him he was memorable enough to her for her to even bother remembering it and it put a bad taste in her mouth thinking of him getting switched on by that simple fact.

Turning the corner to book it out of there, he continued to call out to

her and she barely heard him before leaving his sight completely around the bend.

"I'll meet you there too, if you want. Hate to see you go, sweet thing, but love to watch you leave." He howled sticking his tongue out and then it got quiet as she ran to her next class angrily.

He had called out to her and laughed when he saw how upset she was not even responding to him anymore. She tried her best to ignore it and didn't say anything to him while walking away with her chin slightly turned up. Now she really WAS acting the part of prude and ice princess and all the other horrible names that circled around the school about her. How ironic.

Thumbing his lower lip he pushed her locker back into place securely so it would close and as he did he noticed she had no pictures on the inside other than her small group of friends. No boyfriend. No competition. No way he could lose.

She was interesting and unlike the other girls who were just too damn easy. She was a challenge and he liked that. He just knew he would have lots of fun with her now that he knew where her locker was. But he had to be careful so it wouldn't come off as harassment. Just all in fun to mess with her head.

Walking off he skipped his next class to go have a smoke and think on new ways he could get to her so he could have fun watching her get all twisted up over him. Once outside at his car he leaned on it and enjoyed his smoke while thinking back to his first face to face encounter with Mandy.

He heard the rumors about her from Tommy and all the other guys. He didn't know how true they were but it got him excited to find out. According to Jeff in first period, Mandy was a locked treasure chest of first time experiences just waiting to be opened. She didn't put out and didn't go steady with any boys.

For a moment people had wondered if she was a closet lesbian but there was no evidence to support that either. She was a mystery and kept to herself. Any guy who tried to approach her would get nowhere with her as she would just run away shyly and leave them

standing there.

Finally, something exciting to do in this shitty hellhole of a town to pass the time and occupy himself. This school was shit, his peers were shit, but he sure liked teasing the girls and Mandy was perfect for that. All the other girls were all over him clammering for his attention. But not her.

He groaned when he thought of what was underneath all her layers while toking on his cigarette slowly. He was imagining with vivid clarity what it might be like to remove them to find out.

When he looked into her deep green eyes he thought he saw something there that reminded him of some long lost memory. Someone he knew a long time ago.

He shook it off not allowing that to surface fully, focusing only on all the sensual games he would love playing with her to see if he could bend her to his will. Once he set his sights on someone he wanted he would not back down or give up. He hoped she could keep up and make it last or he would get terribly bored with it all.

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Mandy didn't have any other shared classes with Billy that she knew of so far. Aside from the risk of seeing him in the lot in the mornings and having to put up with him in English class or chancing him being in the halls, so far so good.

She breathed a sigh of relief that she had only run into him once with the locker episode. She would just have to be more careful when going to and from it in the halls looking for him so she could hide from him if he was there and wait it out.

Thinking about it in class unwantedly, all his sexual comments towards her that made her stomach churn, she was mortified and filled with absolute disgust.

For him to go after Tina and then immediately try to go after her too really upset her. He had no shame. She felt bad for Tina too and any other girl that fell for him. He was definitely a player that would get



around to all the girls but the joke was on him because once he did, all his prospects would dry out and start talking about him. She could imagine the girls warning each other away from him eventually and then he would be utterly alone.

Her thoughts shifted to Tucker, her next misery piece she would have to fix and deal with. Hiding out in the library to escape Billy had been great but after having Tucker get upset with her in there she now felt that both boys would cause her to hide away there. Her guilt for Tucker acting weird and getting upset at all of them was growing by every moment she couldn't see him to fix it between them.

She would simply have to call him or something later once she got home if she didn't see him after school let out, but right now all she could focus on was finding Nikki and trying to secure a ride home.

She did not want to be walking on that road now with this crazy perverted boy driving that monster of a car possibly looking for her now. Mandy simply didn't want to have any more run ins with Billy Hargrove if she could help it.

Maybe her and Nikki could work something out so she wouldn't have to walk along Old Cherry Road to school risking him seeing her.

Then she realized, that hardly mattered, since he lived right across the street from her and everytime she was out front of her house, he would see her if he was there.

*God... screwed no matter what I do. I really shouldn't have antagonized him. Now he's never gonna leave me be. Way to go, Mandy. You've simply attracted the big fish to eat you up, the little fish.*

Her plan once she would get home everyday after school was to run up to her house and quickly go inside hoping that he wouldn't be there at his place staring at her from across the street or be fast enough to approach her. She was so nervous about his attentions towards her that she could barely concentrate on her last few classes but she did take notes and write everything down she could for studying later.

She somehow managed to make it through Biology, Math, History,

and her P.E. class just fine after lunch being completely left alone and not seeing any sight of "his Royal Hotness" as Nikki had dubbed him.

Although she heard girls whispering about him being on the basketball team and having a P.E. class as well, making good with the coach of the Hawkins High team.

Poor Steve... that meant he had to deal with him and there was most likely rivalry between them. She sadly could see Billy being pretty good at it with his athletic build so she imagined he was most likely killing it on the court.

Mandy found herself wishing and hoping against all hope that in no way would Billy's allotted P.E. class be around the same time as hers. The boys and girls were separated on two sides of the same Gym as there were two sections to the building for gender division. This included the showers and restrooms, thank God. But she still did not want to bump into him while passing through the two sides in the common chambers that ran between them.

The thought of it made her tug self consciously on the ridiculously short Hawkins High green gym shorts they made them wear. She hated them because they showed her legs and thighs so much so she requested her P.E. teacher to at least allow her to wear leggings underneath which she happily got approved to do. The uniform was mandatory or it would accrue points against their grade to not suit up. If Billy ever saw her in these things she would die of embarrassment fully knowing he would put his eyes all over places on her they had no business being.

Today P.E. consisted of playing dodgeball and Mandy loathed it because she could never hit anyone properly with the ball, often accidentally getting people's heads, crotches, or missing them entirely. She also got pelted mercilessly by Carol and some of the more mean popular girls intentionally, and was always unable to dodge very well.

After her shameful execution of the game and Carol and her friends being even more ruthless than usual, they all did laps on the track running or jogging. Once it was over she would wait until all the girls were done with their showering and social time in the locker rooms

before she took hers.

She liked to be completely alone because she didn't want anyone seeing her body. Being naked and exposed like that was too much for her and she learned her lesson from last time when the girls had cornered her and started making fun of her anatomy snapping towels at her and jeering at her. High school girls could be so cruel it was ridiculous.

After finishing cleaning herself up and dressing, the last period bell finally rang, and she breathed a sigh of relief. Walking around with her gym bag stuffing her towel in it she was greeted by a smiling Nikki who bumped into her.

"Mandy! Come with me! Right now!" She grabbed her hand and tugged, pulling her onto the boys side of the gym before Mandy could even say anything or ask her what was going on. She struggled to break free but Nikki held tight giggling and dragging her all the way to the boys gym and pulling her to one of the front benches.

Before they entered onto the court, Nikki had her hands over her eyes leading her so she couldn't see anything. She heard the sounds of grunts, yells, cheering, and heavy thudding of what sounded like feet and basket balls against the gym floor. Nikki giggled and then suddenly pulled them off letting her look around.

"Tadaaaaa!" She shouted with glee. Mandy looked and saw some guys playing Basketball together practicing.

Some were running around with shirts on, others with shirts off, to divide the team into two for practice. Nikki kicked her feet excitedly over the bench step wiggling in her seat. Apparently there was after school practice for the team and as they sat there, her friend pointed out Steve to her. Nancy saw them sitting there and came over to join them.

"Hey! I didn't know you liked to come watch the guys play." Nancy smiled sweetly to Mandy and Nikki folding her hands in her lap. She was dressed cute today in a sweater top and her typical long skirts she liked to wear. She had a binder resting on her lap with her hands over it and a pencil behind her ear.

"Normally, we don't. But today is special. I have a treat for my friend Mandy here. Oh but we wouldn't mind watching Steve too with you, Nance." Nikki's voice oozed mischief and Mandy groaned afraid of what she had walked her into.

"That's cool. Well I come to watch Steve play. He's pretty good. Coach has been saying awesome things about him and he has never been happier." Nancy sounded really proud and Mandy congratulated Steve to her smiling. She was still wondering what Nikki had up her sleeve.

"Hey, Nikki, I wanted to ask you a favor. Do you think you could give me rides to and from scho-" Before she could even get her question out, both Nikki and Nancy looked back out onto the court. Nikki's face was beaming excitedly and Nancy gave her a puzzled look following where she was staring.

Mandy was afraid to look. Her eyes felt drawn to where her friend was gazing as if being pulled on by the world's most powerful magnet against her will.

Walking through the arch of the gym chamber doorway from the boy's locker rooms and showers, was none other than Billy Hargrove. He was completely shirtless, clad in the green tight familiar Hawkins gym shorts. All of his muscles were on full display and Nikki squealed pointing.

Nancy looked over and her mouth fell open. When Mandy was staring, her breath hitching and a lump showing up in her throat, she saw Steve also notice his entrance and he had an angry scowl on his face glaring at Billy.

Grinning at the response he invoked in him enjoying it immensely, Billy made a show of it and paused to take a drink from the water fountain. Mandy looked around for the exit on this side of the gym ready to bolt and noticed Tommy, Tina, and Carol were also sitting in the bleachers in the far top corner. They had most likely all come to watch Steve and Billy throw down on the court.

When Mandy tried to get up and leave Nikki grabbed her making her sit down and she sighed.

"No you don't. I worked hard to figure this out and set this up for you. Enjoy, my sweet little Mandy. Oh... look at that body. I'm gonna teach you to appreciate it sooner or later, girl."

Nikki laughed and put more gum in her mouth then began hollaring and shouting with Nancy for Steve. He turned and smiled dribbling the ball grinning and stopped to wave at them, especially Nancy, who blushed sitting there watching her boyfriend.

Billy turned his head in the direction where all the hollaring was going on and noticed the three girls sitting there. His smile got dangerously wide and Mandy tried to duck her head behind Nikki's shoulder so he wouldn't recognize her.

Billy winked at her. Too late. Damn it all.

Seizing the perfect opportunity as Steve was distracted and to show off, Billy charged like a juggernaut over to Steve and whirling around him he knocked the ball loose from his arm and took possession of it. He bounced it on the gym floor with a cocky smirk and began taunting Steve about not being able to handle his balls better. The insult was suggestive and aimed at sexually demoralizing him.

Mandy frowned. Steve was her friend too. She didn't want him to suffer either at the hands of someone like Hargrove. Nikki eventually made eye contact with Carol and Tina who waved her over so she got up telling them she would be right back.

Now it was just Nancy and her sitting side by side equally feeling bad for Harrington who was being hounded, chased, mocked, and having the ball stolen constantly by a faster, bigger, stronger Billy on the court. He looked absolutely degraded and ashamed but still tried to keep his game face on not wanting his girl and his friends to see that it was getting to him.

Both boys were sweaty and often locked close together each one trying to take the ball from the other in turns depending on who had it. Billy looked up at Mandy and stuck his tongue out making a show of his aggressive jock like mentality while he obliterated Steve on the court in front of them all.

Mandy looked away and searched for Nikki who was having an intense conversation with Carol. Most likely about the pool party at Steve's and planning ahead for things.

She noticed Tommy looking at her like a hungry shark, with a wide freckle faced grin on his face, his eyes lit up at her noticing. He waved at her in a taunting way fully knowing she was afraid of him. He had spent years harassing her but he never got her alone to do much worse for which she was thankful. Mandy always had her friends with her and went straight home to and from school, leaving him no window of opportunity to push further than public humiliation from time to time.

It was practically impossible not to run into him since they both shared similar social circles because of Nancy, Steve, and Nikki. The webs and ties of highschool classism were complicated at best and difficult to maintain at times. She looked away clearly agitated. It was inevitable he would bump into her from time to time despite her best attempts to avoid him as she was trying to do with Billy and failing miserably.

He had left her alone all summer but being back here on the new school year meant he had one more year of enjoying making her miserable. She looked away and when Nancy noticed him doing that to her she boldly flipped him off in response and in Mandy's defense.

She knew of the things Tommy had done to her and despite having once been friends with Steve's friends since she was dating him, she did not approve and hated Tommy and his bs almost as much as Mandy, Tucker, and Alex did. Nikki had to deal for Tina and Carol's sake but she often stood up for Mandy if Tommy got too out of control.

"Don't let him get to you. That's what he wants. If you just ignore him, he won't get the rise out of you that he anticipates, and then he should stop." Nancy leaned in whispering to her trying to give her courage and insight. She was really sweet and good at that. Mandy smiled at her attempts to cheer her up.

She was trying to do just that but that's exactly what she did to Billy and look how that turned out. He loved every moment of her

defiance and attempts at ignoring him. She groaned.

*Three boys I now to have to deal with. Fuck my life.* She thought.

"I wish it were that simple, Nance. I really do wish it were." She put her head in her hands and then leaned one cheek on her palm trying to go back to watching Steve hoping he was gaining the higher ground. Shortly after Nikki returned and took her former spot.

"Isn't he amazing? Oh, he looks so good in sweat. Damn... I can only imagine what he might look like with wet hair in the shower, or on the beach, or... in a pool?"

Nikki grinned and was baiting Mandy on that one. She guessed she got intel from Carol that Billy would be there for the party. This greatly disturbed her. She wanted to leave and go home.

Billy was still watching her while he shredded Steve and sunk the ball into the basket over and over again with the coach impressed and praising him then giving pointers to Steve who was bent over gripping his knees and panting. He wiped the sweat from his brow and struggled to keep up with Billy. Nancy was looking sad for him just as Mandy was.

"He better not wind up in a pool. Unless I'm the one drowning him in it." Mandy said spitefully knowing full well Nikki knew what she meant by this but most likely not understanding the animosity of the comment.

She hadn't told her yet just how he had been hounding her constantly. She'd rather keep it to herself as she wasn't one to much invite others into her troubles if she could handle it on her own.

If he came to that party she would hide in the bathroom locked in all night long and drink by herself waiting until everyone left, including him.

"Mandy, relax. You'll be with us, nothing bad will happen you have my word." Nikki nudged her arm with hers playfully and started calling out to Steve encouraging him.

Nancy joined in even calling out a foul when Billy knocked Steve

over using his strong body to throw off his balance and take the ball. The coach allowed it and Mandy couldn't understand why.

As they watched, Billy walked over to Steve who was laying on his back looking very tired. He leaned over him bent at the waist and seemed to offer him his hand to get up. Steve looked at him with a wary expression not believing for a second he was trying to help him. Billy whispered something fiercely to him as he towered over him then let go of his hand making him fall back onto the court and stepping over him to continue his game.

He looked at her with a feral grin and seemed to flex his muscles a bit at her. They were slick with sweat and shining under the gym lights. His curly blond hair was slightly damp sticking to his neck and forehead and he saw how her eyes went to his chest and lower to where the gym shorts hugged his hips and groin somewhat snug and loose at the same time, leaving very little imagination to the heat he was packing below.

She blushed and pretended to be talking to Nancy and Nikki which only made him laugh. Throwing the ball behind him he walked over like he was going to approach the girls. Carol's eyes were on him also admiring his form and Tommy didn't even seem to care. She guessed Billy had taken Steve's place with him too, stealing his former partner in crime back when he was a bit of a bully before meeting Nancy. She heard about the falling out between him, Tommy, and Carol.

Jogging over with his taut muscles moving in all the right ways for a girls wet dream he wiped his forehead with his arm and stood there in front of the three of them.

"Hey Nikki, hey Nancy." He said with a slight grin. Then he turned his blue eyes onto her and his grin widened considerably.

"Hello, Mandy." He had said their names normal but when he said hers he drew it out heavy with a deep breath intentionally in a husky deep voice and it sounded different in the way he addressed her.

Nikki bumped into her when she was silent unsure of what to say as if trying to coax her to respond and say SOMETHING to him. Nancy looked away concentrating on Steve and got up to walk over to him



at the fountain and check on him.

"Ummm. Hi." Mandy said making Billy laugh.

"Enjoying the show?" He said more to her than to Nikki and it was all her friend could do to hide her stupid grin she was throwing Mandy's way. Sensing the tension between them she excused herself leaving her alone with trouble with a capital T.

"I think I'm gonna... go. Over there. With Carol and Tina. Have fun kids. Be back in a bit... Mandy."

Nikki mocked how Billy had said her name and he watched her leave. Mandy tried to grab her and protest Nikki abandoning her leaving her all alone with him, but wasn't fast enough and shrunk down into the bench seat in defeat.

Billy turned his attention fully back on to Mandy putting one leg up on the bench in front of her bending his knee and getting closer leaning in. Mandy gulped and tried to act like he wasn't there attempting to exercise Nancy's advice to the best of her ability.

"We have simply got to stop running into each other like this. It's almost like you have a thing for me, princess." She wanted to punch him right in his wide beautiful mouth for saying that.

He hummed deeply and watched her, his hungry eyes locking intently onto hers. She scowled and tried to ignore his comment that she could possibly ever want to be around him that much.

"I didn't run into you. Nikki brought me here. I'm watching Steve's game. That's all."

She said it dismissively at him and it made him chuckle at her. Somehow he knew that wasn't the whole truth. He saw how she had been watching him when he first came out and when he was running circles around her little friend Steve, effortlessly, might he add.

"Really? Are you sure? I could have sworn you were enjoying watching me run up and down the court earlier." He reached forward as if he were going to collect a few strands of her dark long hair and she flinched pulling back.

"I'm sure. I couldn't be more sure in my entire life. Go back to chasing your basketballs, Billy. There's nothing for you to see over here." She spat at him and he grinned.

"I beg to differ on that." He eyed her again his lashes framing his bright blue eyes as they danced at her snarky comebacks she fired his way. He had leaned in even closer giving her a good whiff of his manly athletic musk mixed with his cologne that made her head swim at the proximity of it all.

"See you at the party then. I'll be sure to get myself all ready for you, sweets. Try not to get too excited over me when you see me there."

Licking his lips running his tongue over his bottom one at her and making her blush furiously, he laughed as he left with those parting words that caused a chill to run up her spine and cause knots in her stomach burning on fire. Out of anger or frustration she had no idea.

Surely he was kidding, right? Wasn't he going with Tina? What a liar. Anything to get her all worked up, even to suggest he would be there for her and her alone.

She had looked up to see if Tina had noticed this little exchange but she was far too busy talking with Carol and Nikki to notice that her crush was flirting horribly with Mandy. He was bold to do that so openly and it would only bring trouble on Mandy's head if Tina got hurt by it. The jerk!

But... he would be there. And so would she, unfortunately.

*Great. Fucking wonderful.*

Was it too late for her to back out now? Her stomach flopped and she looked over to Nikki who had partially been watching their exchange and grinning like an idiot while sitting with Tommy, Tina, and Carol. Damn her. She set her up for this and she knew it.

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## **4. The Escape - Girl Talk Boy Talk**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

### **Chapter 4 - THE ESCAPE - GIRL TALK BOY TALK**

#### **Summary:**

After showing off in the gym for Mandy, shes upset about him tormenting both her and Steve in his own little annoying way. Flirting openly with her in front of Tina, Carol, and Tommy enrages her and because Nikki mentioned what he might look like all wet, her rage-lust makes her have visualized fantasies about it much to her anger.

Now she just wants to go home with Nikki giving her a ride before he can track her down after showering and changing from practice. She doesnt want them to run into him on Old Cherry Road so she begs Nikki to take a different back country road so they won't be anywhere near where he drives. When they do make it to the house, Nikki stays and comforts her friend having girly time to talk about many things.

Meanwhile, Tucker calls Alex and asks him to come over,

hangout, play video games. They talk about whats bothering him, Mandy, girls in general. Angsty unrequited love stuff.

Billy makes the mistake of pissing off Steve on the court and taunting him in the showers when its HIS pool party. He would crash but he wants to be welcome so he can scope out Mandy if she shows up. He offers to buy the booze to make ammends. Tommy freaks about this co existing crap.

NOTES: LOL Steve and Billy bonding. Who knew? :P Enjoy :D

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Finally having her fill of Billy, his cruel antics and perverse comments, and Tommy staring her down as well, Mandy stormed off out of the gymnasium and made her way to the main parking lot with Nikki trailing helplessly after her.

Nancy had called out to them but decided to stay with Steve who was plenty pissed almost as equally as Mandy was at Billy if not more. He had been antagonizing them both just in different ways but bullying was bullying regardless.

Mandy ran because she didn't want to hang around for him to come out to his car and see her standing there to further humiliate and antagonize her. Although she would guess that would be impossible unless he was superhuman fast at changing before leaving the gym.

Nevertheless, she rushed, angry that he really got his kicks out of making her blood run feverishly with his out of line comments and his lustful bedroom eyes turned on her. She went red just thinking about it and it absolutely boiled her blood.

Mandy was supersonic in her pace, not slowing down for anything not even her friend who struggled to keep up calling after her, wanting to get to Nikki's car before Billy could wind up chasing her down.

But she wrote that off as silly knowing he probably had to shower off after practice first before he would be at his car, if he had finished tormenting Steve for the day, that is.

Billy had looked so happily and positively insane while showing off for her and moving fast against the other guys as well as Steve on the court. His tongue hanging out of his mouth wagging from side to side like he was in ecstasy over her watching him. It made him look like a famished wild animal crouching excitedly while getting ready to dominate and chase down it's prey to devour it.

Then she recalled what Nikki said about the sweat that covered him while he was half naked out there. The way he had bent over to have his little drink from the fountain made his strong back look so incredible.

It was like nothing she had ever seen before on any guy when he walked over to Steve, his large athletic body looking positively sinful in the atmosphere of the gym. All his muscles, angles, and curves, contouring in shadow and light.

Even in her anger she recalled how his sweat looked doing it's thing on him making him glisten and shine like a well oiled body builder as he moved around the court. She had witnessed his strong bare back twisting and flexing while slamming the basketball in the hoop time and time again.

She noticed his powerful legs as they were running, jumping, standing strong when firmly planted so his calves looked rock solid. The look of his amazing hips, toned abs, his tight round ass, and his thick groin nestled in those tight green gym shorts and how he moved in them.

She shook her head still powerwalking as she fought to forget all of it. She would forever have those images engraved in her mind every time she looked at him now.

*Damnit, Nikki. Ugghhhh. Thanks.*

If sweat did that then she could only guess how much more attractive he would look dripping wet from head to toe as water rained down all around him while he flexed his muscles to scrub himself in the shower. She could bet that's what he was doing right now.

Mandy thought of the boys locker rooms and showers. She thought of

him being in there. She pictured helplessly what Nikki had said about how good he would look in the water if he were on the beach or in a pool.

She practically saw the water dripping off of him over his handsome face while his eyes closed with long lashes hanging down glistening and wet. Saw it dripping from his strong wide button like nose, over his sensual dark red lips and his blonde mustache, eventually working its way down to his equally strong impressive chin. Just thinking about it dripping off his fingertips and running in crystal clear lines down along his stomach and his thighs as well as other parts of him she dared not try to imagine even further down.

*Stop it, Mandy, Jesus!*

She mentally scolded herself while trying to regain control of her wandering wicked thoughts and reign herself back in to reality. It wasn't like her at all to be so full of an odd mixture of pentup rage-lust like this which was clouding her thoughts, making her angry and turned on, all in one.

What the hell was wrong with her? What was happening to make her feel this way and why did it have to be him to cause it? Him out of all the guys in the world let alone in this school?

Picturing him in the shower and feeling herself getting hot over it. Good Lord, that was a new low for her. Those thoughts didn't make it any easier in her mind to hate him as she let her anger drive her further away from the place where he most likely still was, far behind her, having the imagined wet and wild moment that was now seeded in her brain searing hot and stuck on replay.

She clenched her fist and tried to calm her breathing. It made her angry because she didn't think of ANY boy, least of all him, in this way. What had come over her?

But she could still see it in her minds eye. It was too late to take it back now. The image of him dripping wet in that shower and those blonde curls soaked while hugging and conforming to him, sticking to his gorgeous face and on the sides of his cheeks as well as his lovely forehead. Curling and curving hair darkened while dripping

around his strong jaw and his thick powerful neck and shoulders.

She could practically see it as if he were right there in front of her grinning sensually while she watched him do it.

Mandy could even hear the sounds of the shower water spraying over him as it dripped deliciously down in drops and beads over his tanned and toned chest. She could hear and see it cascading over his fit pecs and gliding along his equally chiseled abs. Heading down... down... down...

***"I'll be sure to get myself all ready for you, sweets."*** She recalled him saying in that deep seductive voice of his. He had fully known what kind of images that would put in her head.

Images of him undressing, showering, then dressing up and putting on his strong cologne. Images of him fixing his gorgeous hair up for the night that he believed was their night together.

But it wasn't. She knew that and she could face it. He had said it as a joke. A tease. Nothing more. He was taking Tina not her. None of it meant anything. None of ANYTHING he said to her meant a damn thing. Just all fun and games at her expense and most likely many others before and after her. Again she felt bad for Tina.

What a horrible horrible person he was to make her think and feel this way about him and to make it sound like he was doing it all for her.

She just needed to get home and put this day in it's grave long forgotten and buried never to be resurrected ever again.

"Mandy! Mandy, wait up! I'm sorry, okay? I thought you would like my surprise, honest! When I saw you take off I immediately ran to follow you out, alright? Mandy, please wait up!"

The sounds of her friends guilt ridden voice snapped her out of it. She could hear Nikki calling after her trying to apologize for seemingly putting her in an uncomfortable situation.

She was seriously just trying to have fun with her and get her an eyeful of Billy in his gym attire to further inspire her to make this

party. It was beginning to finally sink in that maybe Mandy truly did not like this guy after all and she was starting to feel bad.

Mandy turned to look at her and stopped her jogging to face her with her hands on her hips and breathless.

"Nikki... I just thought I had made myself clear to you several times that I wanted nothing to do with him. I understand you feel he is sexy and that you are into him. But can you please just leave me out of it from now on?"

Nikki saw how surly she was being and it made her lift a brow. But when Mandy made that face, that one face she knew all too well as her best friend of three years, she immediately dropped her suspicion of Mandy's weird behavior and nodded in agreement to respect her wishes.

She tried so hard not to be mean to Nikki but it was sort of just spilling out of her and she couldn't control it very well. Nikki looked down at first but then she came over and hugged her tight. Mandy hugged her back then dropped her arms lazily down to her side.

"I'm sorry. I won't tempt you anymore with him. Forgive me?"

She looked her in her eyes truly feeling bad and now Mandy felt bad too for being a bit snappy when explaining. She would talk with her more about it once they got to her house.

"It's okay, Nikki. I know you mean well. I'm sorry too. Look I just... I will explain it when we get to my place and we can talk in my room before you have to go home."

Nikki nodded and hugged her again feeling bad for tricking her into going to a place where she knew Billy would be. Especially the pool party.

She would just have to keep an eye on Mandy and make sure she was happy at the party undisturbed by Billy as much as she possibly could manage. She knew she couldn't fully control his actions to keep him away but she could at least try to be supportive and keep Mandy by her side so she wasn't intimidated by his presence.



"I'm still having you wear that bikini though."

Nikki curled her lips up in a playful smile and Mandy couldn't help but laugh even through her ire. Good ol' Nikki always finding a way to get at least something she wanted with Mandy after they made up from a disagreement.

"If it's too revealing, I'm not wearing it. That's final."

This made Nikki laugh knowing that eventually once Mandy saw how pretty it was she would cave under the pressure to wear it if she insisted enough and told her how good it looked on her. She knew Mandy's only true problem was lack of self confidence in her body, how others saw her, and how to carry herself.

Mandy considered wearing it spitefully out of a need to flaunt in Billy's face what he could not have, what she would not EVER let him have. If Billy was messing with her so bad like this constantly causing her to be out of breath around him when showing off his body, maybe it was high time she GAVE HIM something to look at and drool over.

Hopefully, it would cause him to be as breathless as he had made her in return to mess with his head making him back off. She seriously doubted it would but it could be worth a shot. Maybe tease him and make him not want her so bad by overcoming her shyness, since that seemed to be a major factor in why he enjoyed toying with her so often. Take that away and what power would he have over her?

It had only been ONE day and he was already throwing chaos into her organized comfortable little world. ONE damn day. Mandy could inject a little chaos into his and see how he liked it after this week was over and they both met at the party.

Hopefully it would piss him off if she flirted with other guys in front of him to drive home the point that she was NOT his, causing him to back off a little bit. She needed him to see she was not an easy victim nor his plaything to corner and manipulate. To see that she could just as easily dish out what he was forcing her to take from him.

It would be pretty funny to see his eyes pop out of his head if he

wound up liking what he saw and then shy away from her if she could call his bluff. To find out that he would be unsure what to do with her if she came on strong to him and annoyed him was tempting.

She saw Tina do it in the gym before she ran off and saw him get a slightly bored look in his eyes so maybe if she acted like that he would piss off. Maybe make the predator run from the prey for a change by becoming overbearing on him.

"Well... maybe I will. I don't know yet." She added on making Nikki smile.

Seeing an image in her head of him drooling over her and running like a coward made her practically cackle out loud and Nikki wondered for a moment if her best friend was cracking up.

"You okay?" She asked her, concern thick in her voice, and Mandy nodded waving it off.

"I'm fine. Don't worry about it. We're cool." Nikki smiled a dazzling smile and was happy to know her Mandy wasn't mad at her.

When they made it to where all the cars were parked, she tried hard not to even look in the direction of the blue Camaro. They were looking for Alex and Tucker before they would be taking off. If she couldn't fix the Billy and Tommy problem she at least ached to fix the Tucker problem as soon as possible.

She frowned when she saw that Tucker had not joined them out front of the school but Alex was there standing alone messing with his fingernails and waiting on his dad who had the car today instead of his son evidently. He looked bored and agitated at not being able to drive himself there and back on his first day of school and it made him appear listless.

"Hey, Alex!" They cried out to him waving and he looked up blocking the sun with his hand so he could see them better. Once he saw who it was his face lit up and he ran over to them.

They met up with him at Nikki's car and he was all smiles as they

briefly told him they weren't going to the arcade or mall today like previously discussed at lunch, but going to Mandy's house instead. Change of plans.

Alex understood and didn't seem to be too upset. But he told them he was hoping they would all go to Scoops Ahoy in an hour or so at least so they could check out Steve's legendary and impressive sailor outfit while using the ice cream as an excuse to tease him about it. He HATED that.

Mandy suspected Alex also had a thing for Robin, she was almost sure of it. Whenever they went to the booth making Steve roll his eyes at their teasing questions for his new job, Robin would smile enjoying their company cracking jokes on Steve with them. Mandy saw Alex looking at her as if he had never seen a girl before. It was cute.

"Where's Tucker? Isn't he riding with us today?" Nikki asked pouting.

"Nawww, he said to me in art class that he would prefer to go home alone. Said he wanted to clear his head over something but he didn't say what."

Mandy's heart dropped in her stomach, the familiar pang of guilt resting there like a dead weight.

"Oh well, that's a bummer. He will contact us when he's ready, I'm sure." Nikki replied.

"If he does get in touch with you though, will you tell us please, Alex?" Mandy said trying to conquer the guilt about what was going on between Tucker and herself hoping Alex might be able to talk with him and get him to come around.

"Yeah, sure will." Alex grinned and hugged both his friends.

"Want a lift? I can drop you off before I take Mandy home." Nikki asked him blowing her gum into a big bubble and Alex nodded enthusiastically with a relieved smile.

Ignoring her better instincts she glanced over at the familiar Camaro resting in the parking lot looking sad and incomplete without Billy in

it or driving it. Somehow he and his car both accented one another. Complimented each other. They fit together just as much as his denim outfits and leather jackets did.

He had an interesting personality, Mandy couldn't deny that, despite being a total pervert. In all this, Mandy couldn't help but smile thinking back on his strange behavior on the court. If it hadn't been upsetting Steve it actually would have been hilarious and she probably would have laughed.

At least for now, Nikki agreed to give her rides to avoid him. That way she wouldn't be walking that back road with Billy hot on her tail roaring down the street with his Camaro as fired up as he was.

Nikki unlocked the car and they all piled in. Alex in the front and Mandy in back since he was the first stop. Alex talked to them about the new machines and games coming to the arcade and how excited he was that they would be getting Dig Dug and Dragon's Lair as new additions.

The ride home was almost an uncomfortable silence, since Tucker was missing to fill that gap, and had been peppered with makeshift small talk here and there. Nikki didn't probe into the Billy thing while driving them and she was grateful for that. Now just wasn't the time.

Mandy's mind wandered to Tucker and how upset he had been earlier in the library. He was irritated with Nikki and Alex for interrupting him, of that she was certain. But why avoid and ignore her? What did she do wrong? She couldn't wrap her head around it.

Tucker only lived a few blocks over from her house and around the corner. Sometimes he would give her lifts and they would ride together if she wasn't walking or didn't feel like it but that was rare.

She kind of missed riding with him and blasting the radio often singing tunes together being silly in the car. She missed his close friendship. She blamed herself for it waning over the summer due to her lack of contact with him or the outside world. Mandy thought of how weird he acted earlier and how upset he got and assumed that being close like that would be out of the question for a while until

they could make up and talk.

Mandy supposed Tucker had always been fond of her in his own way. Eager to talk to her and spend time with her whenever he could and always asking for the time of day. He was always calling her up offering for her to hangout with him and the group over summer break but she just had other plans that got in the way.

Now that she thought of it, those plans had been a tad bit selfish, resulting in her hiding away from everything and doing her own thing. She now realized that it had actually hurt him with how little he had seen her over the summer. Mandy had just thought he was moping just to mope. Going through teenage growing pains for a boy. But she had also seen first hand just how depressed he would get whenever she wasn't available to him or their friends.

Mandy guessed he had deep down really liked her ever since they first met in freshman year but just never had the courage to tell her, only to show her in subtle ways. Just how explosive would this get if Billy started openly flirting with her in front of him? Tucker would either blow up or just storm off and avoid her even more than he was now. It would be a mess because she would have to explain to him that she didn't even like Billy, but knowing Tucker, he wouldn't listen he would just assume.

Mandy frowned and looked out the window resting her chin on her hand watching the trees, cars, and people go by along the drive. She noticed the atmosphere of the town as it was preparing to go through the changing of the seasons.

She undeniably hated change. She loved the familiar and change often scared her. Tucker had changed but Mandy was still the same, at least as far as she could guess. Despite her unwanted attraction to Billy Hargrove, she felt as though she were frozen in time with Peter Pan syndrome while everyone else was growing up, maturing, and learning to move out of their comfort zones adapting to life and their hormones. But Mandy was still the same girl, yesterday, today, and tomorrow. The same shy girl she would always be. No sexy guy would change that, not even Billy.

After they dropped Alex off, promising him before he left that they

would go to the mall tomorrow after school, Nikki made small talk with Mandy to pass the time as they drove trying to alleviate the uncomfortable pockets of silence. Neither one of them talked about Tucker. That was a tender subject at the moment to be avoided at all costs.

They took a different road at Mandy's request. It was a back way drive more scenic than the other one with thicker trees and vegetation as well as less farms. This was done so they would not chance running into Billy in his car. However, Mandy seemed to forget that if he was already home, whether outside or sitting in his car, it wouldn't matter either way because he would see them pull up.

When they arrived and parked at the curb in front of her house, she checked the opposite driveway real fast and saw his car was in fact there. Damn he drove fast. He must have been pushing at least eighty miles per hour in that thing to get there before they did seeing as how they had a head start due to his practice session in the gym after school.

Her heart instantly dropped into her stomach causing her to quickly duck down in the seat trying to hide as Nikki pulled up and put it in park shutting off her engine. She looked at her crouching down and gave a smirk trying to repress a bit of laughter.

"It's okay, Mandy. His car's here but he's not. I don't see him outside. He must be in his house and busy. Let's just get you inside okay?"

Nodding and counting to three in a childish way timing herself to get her courage up, Mandy climbed out of Nikki's vehicle shutting the door as quickly and quietly as she could running to her front door at break neck speed looking like a track star.

When Nikki shut her door and locked her car up to walk up the driveway where her friend was freaking out, she saw she was an absolute mess fumbling for her key. Nikki covered her mouth so as not to laugh while watching her struggle anxiously to get the door open.

Sighing and rolling her eyes at her inability to function, Nikki gently pushed her aside and produced her own spare key that Mandy had

give her a while back and lifted it up presenting it magician style as if to an audience. She then unlocked the door for her and pushed it open no longer able to keep from laughing.

Mandy grumbled and rushed inside pulling Nikki in by her hand behind her. Once the girls were in the house Mandy closed the door and locked it frantically. She then pressed her back up against it with her eyes closed as Nikki took a seat on the couch in the living room getting comfortable.

"Girl, you need to chill. It's all good. He didn't see us." She grinned watching Mandy press herself flat to the door and then whirl around looking through the small glass window in the middle of it. She was spying across the street to Billy's house in full panic making sure Nikki was right.

"How do you know, Nikki? He ALWAYS seems to know where I am and always finds me. It's really creepy."

Nikki sighed and rolled her eyes. Getting up she took Mandy's hand and tugged her towards her stairs.

"Come on girl, let's go to your room so we can talk and help you work this out. You are a mess and you need Nurse Nikki to check your vitals. It's time for a friend checkup. Tell me EVERYTHING and I will try to help you as best as I can."

Mandy nodded happy that her friend was there for her now more than ever. She just had so much going on she didn't know how to juggle it all. This was the roughest year she had ever had and it was only the first day. How would she survive the rest of the year if things kept going like this?

She groaned and followed Nikki up the stairs ready to lay it all out on the table and get some much needed relief by venting all the pent up thoughts and feelings she had been holding onto. It would give them a chance to talk about Tucker's outburst, about Billy, about Tommy, and of course without saying, give Nikki a chance to dish on all the hot guys she was interested in and Steve's big party this weekend.

.....

Alex had been lounging on the couch at home pigging out on chips and salsa while playing one of his favorite games in front of the T.V. His parents weren't home yet so he figured he could hook it up to the sweet sound system and television set in the living room for the ultimate gaming experience.

He was playing a very frustrating game called Dragon Slayer on his third gen Nintendo Entertainment System. The Nintendo Family Computer in all it's red and white glory was pretty boss. His parents had gotten it for him last Christmas but he was really excited for the new NES that would be coming out soon in a year or so that was still in development.

He had almost beat the level when he got blind sided by an enemy and taken out making him grumble at the T.V. screen in frustration and put his controller down for a break.

Rethinking that break and driven to win he picked the controller right back up stuffing a few chips in his mouth and tried again. He was just about to beat it when the phone rang in the living room and he tried to single handedly play his game as he grabbed the phone. Leaning it into the nook between his neck and shoulder he answered it letting a cuss word slip out.

"Welcome to Hawkins Mortuary, you kill em we chill em, you tag em we bag em." He said still focusing on the game trying his best to get back to the place he was before.

"Yeah, I'd like to order six cadavers for a banquet this evening." Alex said over the line in a morbid tone of voice playing along with his friend.

"Awww, sorry, pal. Fresh out. I do have some chips and salsa though." He button mashed the controll and cursed under his breath when he failed the level again. This was just as horrible as playing Ghouls And Ghosts. You get far enough, you die, you start all over again at the beginning of the map. Taking a big gulp of his sprite he burped loudly into the phone and sighed.

He knew he was depressed but this was definitely not like him. Normally he enjoyed his video games even when he wasn't always



the most skillful with them.

Deep down Tucker also knew what was bothering him but there was nothing he could do to fix it unless he could talk to Mandy. She was always so busy being wrapped up in her own life it was like she no longer had any more time for him, even as a friend.

Try as he might he couldn't get her off his mind and all he wanted was a chance to tell her how he felt about her. It had been growing within him over the years getting harder and harder to ignore the older they got. But she was an oblivious wall he was unable to scale.

"Sold! Hey, dude! What are you up to tonight?" Tucker wasn't really in the mood for company but he humored him and answered anyway.

"Not much, man. I'm just taking out my teenage aggression using some good old fashioned videogame ass-whoopin therapy. You know, what all the wholesome kids are doing these days."

Tucker tried to concentrate but died again and started grumbling getting upset and Alex laughed when he heard him let loose a torrent of profanity.

"Sounds like you're losin', bro. Hey, want me to come over and bring some of my horror movies I rented from Family Video? They're pretty raunchy! Lots of boob shots going on."

They were wonderfully dark and deranged together as the best of friends and absolutely shared an intense love of horror movies. Their parents always said it would warp them and rot their brains but if his mom and dad could sit watching game shows and sitcoms all day well then they were no better off than he was.

"Or if that doesn't sound appetizing, maybe we could chill and play some games together? Your system is pretty sweet and I have a few games for it we could try out."

Alex was being abnormally cheerful and uplifting towards Tucker but he smiled none the less shutting off his console giving up entirely. He wasn't mad at him but he was causing a bit of a distraction making it hard for him to keep dying all over the place with style.

"I appreciate it, Alex, but I'm not a charity case. I will be okay."

He didn't mean to snap at him but he knew what he was trying to do. He figured that because Alex talks to Nikki who talks to Mandy and all of them were present for his blowup episode in the library that through a chain of communication they may have asked Alex in person to hang out with him to try and cheer him up. Basically he was their man on the inside to check on him to make sure he was okay. Sort of to assess and scope out the situation or damage.

Girls. They were never up front they always had to have some sort of way of going around things instead of being direct. He just couldn't for the life of him figure out why they did what they did. Especially Mandy.

If she was that concerned about him she could have just walked over and talked to him in person as they lived practically on the same block. But no, she wouldn't do that. That would make things too easy. Mandy avoided she didn't confront. He sighed but softened his tone up as Alex continued trying to get him to hang out.

He was throwing all kinds of fun activities at him, even going so far as to offer him a lift to the Starcourt Mall to pick on Steve's uniform and visit with him and Robin for a bit. That always cheered him up.

"Alright, yeah I guess. Come on over and bring your horror movies with you. We can make some popcorn and watch your flicks. I'm down for that. Hey... BYOS, fool. Bring your own soda. You have a bad habit of going through all mine within an hour. I'm surprised your teeth haven't rotted out of your head yet with all the caffeine and sugar you inhale."

Alex laughed agreeing and he smiled as they joked on the phone together before getting off the line. Maybe he really could use company from a good friend to feel better. Another thing he hated about girls... they were often right more than he cared to admit it.

Hopping up from the couch he decided to change out of his school clothes and into something more comfortable worthy of an afternoon lounging in front of the T.V. with a friend being a couch potato.

When Alex arrived he eventually worked out what was bothering Tucker. He knew that his friend had guessed correctly that was his entire aim and goal of coming over but with time he managed to get him to open up about it anyway.

The only advice he could give him was exactly what he had been thinking. He needed to talk to and confront Mandy about his feelings so they could move past it. He resolved to do that tonight and come to her like he used to. He would climb up and tap on her window asking her to let him in so he could get it all off his chest and confess his feelings. Hopefully, she felt the same.

.....

After practice, Billy looked around the gym but Mandy and her little friend were gone. Tina was all over him but he told her to save it for the party tonight.

Wrapped in his towel he headed for the showers and noticed that Tommy was there and Steve was just beginning to lather up.

"Well, well, Harrington, how did you like practice today, pretty boy?" He jeered while lathering himself with some soap and clearing out his nose with the shower water.

Tommy laughed, his wide freckled grin spreading, as he watched the new top dog Hargrove come in to replace and torment Steve. He knew it would only be a matter of time before Billy would be King pushing Steve out of the spotlight. He chose the winning side, clearly, him and Carol both.

"Fuck off." Steve said while washing his hair.

"Oh, fiesty today. You can ease up now, tough guy, your girl isn't around to impress right now. Sorry about making you look like shit out there. Consider it incentive for you to improve your game." Billy began to lather his hair with a very expensive shampoo and thoroughly scrubbed his luxurious golden locks.

"What do you want, Billy? Didn't you get enough blood out there on the court? Come to bust my balls in here too?" Steve shot back trying

to hurry up and finish bathing so he could leave. This act was getting old and he was tired of Hargrove's shit.

"Not much there to bust." Tommy jumped in and Billy eyed him narrowing his blue intense orbs in a glare as if to tell him never to speak out of line again around him when he was in charge and having fun. Tommy zipped his lips and looked sorry for interrupting. Billy grinned.

*Good lap dog.*

He turned his attention back over at Steve and faked like his feelings were hurt at his accusation.

"Nah, man, you got me all wrong. I'm here to HELP you. Why do you think I gave you those pointers out there?" He smirked and rinsed his hair and stood there watching Steve's face to see if he would lighten up or not.

"Yeah. I need your help like I need a fuckin' hole in my head." Steve barely audibly whispered it and Billy leaned in as if he didn't hear him properly.

"Come again?" He put his hand to his ear making a menacing face.

Steve didn't answer and Tommy simply smirked as he washed himself.

"So, there's a pool party. Heard it from a couple of little birdy's that it's going to be pretty wild. You going? Could knock back a couple of drinks and check out all the bitches in the sea."

He was washing the soap and shampoo out of his eyes so he missed Tommy's expression. Didn't he know it was Steve's party? He could have sworn both he and Carol told him that. Ooops.

"Well, I guess I kind of have to seeing as how it's MY party. And no, you're not invited."

Billy froze. It was Steve's? What a small world, wonders never cease. Had he really hounded the very same guy that was throwing it unwittingly?

He wasn't sorry for taunting him on the court and playing better than him but in the showers he tried to ease up on him. Maybe he could give him some more Billy pointers only this time about which alcohol to bring, what music to play, and attempting to make amends by offering to buy the booze for his party. No hard feelings, right?

"Really? Interesting. Well, I would crash it then. But were both adults here, right? Why don't we make a deal."

He grinned as he rinsed his hair thoroughly, wiping water and shampoo from his eyes while sliding away his long curls from his forehead that covered his face from the water running down lengthening it considerably. Steve turned to glare at him.

"No. No deal. You're not welcome." Steve said coldly finishing washing himself and rinsing. He went for his towel. He was about to walk away.

"Awww, come on, Harrington. Don't be sour. Tell you what, you let go of your anger over today's ass whooping I gave you on the court and I will help you buy the BEST damn alcohol for your party. What do you say?" He leaned his arm over the shower spigot waiting for an answer.

Tommy looked back and forth between them as they all wrapped their towels around themselves to head over to the lockers to dress. What the fuck was this?

"Bullshit." Steve said turning to him as he wrapped himself up in his towel and Billy was getting irritated. Steve looked at him as if he were nuts or just a habitual liar. He couldn't possibly score that.

"You're underaged. Unless you have an adult buy for you I don't see how you'd manage that. Nice try." He turned to walk away and go to his locker.

Billy and Tommy followed him as he opened it pulling out his regular clothes starting to change. Billy looked impatient but kept a straight face as he pulled out his clothes as well.

Tommy just sat silently in his towel on the bench to see how this

would play out. He was hoping Billy would replace Steve not make nice with him and become bosom buddies. He frowned slightly but stayed quiet. If he interrupted again Billy would most likely go off on him.

"Not bullshit. I've got the hook up, my man. If you want it I can get it. All I ask is you make me welcome to this little party of yours and we can let bygones be bygones. Deal?"

Billy held out his hand to Steve waiting for him to accept. His face was hardened in an alpha stare the longer Steve took to shake on it.

Steve looked at his hand then to Billy before flitting his eyes away angrily. The last time he offered it and Steve accepted he pulled back and dropped him on the court. He wasn't falling for it this time.

"Yeah? How?" Was all he asked as he slipped his shirt over his head and towel dried his hair.

Billy rolled his eyes and sighed then reached into his gym bag, got his wallet out, and pulled out a little plastic card. Steve's eyes got wide as he realized what it was.

"A little elbow grease and flirting with a female cashier and it's no trouble at all. They never ask or bother to look twice at it because they're too busy looking at me. I guess I look older than my actual age so they never guess I'm in high school. It's all in how you carry yourself, Stevo."

He winced at Billy calling him that nickname. But he had a good point. Billy smirked clearly full of himself.

He impulsively took the card from Billy's hand inspecting it and lifting it up into the light.

"Holy shit, you've got a pretty convincing fake I.D. here. How the hell did you get this?" He held it up and Billy snatched it out of his hand.

"Not one word about this, Harrington, or you're dead. My little secret and no I'm not telling. So what do you say? You want the shit or not?"

He truly did have the perfect hook up and wasn't lying after all. Steve looked impressed and even a little bit excited. This solved his biggest problem because he had no idea where or how he was going to score the alcohol. His usual contacts weren't getting back to him. He was desperate. He had to be if he was considering taking Billy's help.

Billy locked eyes with him and for a minute Tommy was expecting Steve to say no and walk away. To his surprise he nodded and raised his hand to shake with Billy on it.

Steve said he could come but if he started any shit he would throw him out on his ass himself. Billy chuckled humorlessly giving him a funny look and sighing knowing full well he would not be capable of doing that physically. Not with judging by how horrible he moved against him out on the court earlier. But he humored him nonetheless telling him he would only be there to drink, pick up chicks, and party hard.

Steve wasn't too sure about him and if he was telling the truth but he decided to let it go and agree.

"Deal. I'll write up a list." He began to list off in his head what kind of alcohol he wanted but was cut short by Billy's protest.

"Fuck no. I'll make the list. You'd pick the weakest shit, I'm sure. Allow me. I've got damn good taste so don't worry. Also, I have some tapes I can bring over for music but if you ruin them your ass is grass, Harrington."

He grinned and slapped Steve on the back and after pulling up his jeans with a hopping motion and putting his socks and boots on he combed his hair snapping his fingers for Tommy to hurry up so they could go. Tommy rushed to get his clothes on not wanting to piss Billy off.

He was pissed that Steve and Billy were getting along. How long would that last cuz he was itching to see them actually fight. He knew Harrington couldn't fight for shit, even Tommy was able to take him on. Even that pathetic Byers kid took him down. Billy would destroy him. And yet here he was being restrained and trying to make amends. Why?

"Thanks." Steve said and slipped him the cash from his bag for the drinks before he left.

"Don't. This isn't a favor. This is an agreement. A business transaction if you will. I don't fuck with you, you don't fuck with me. Co-exist as long as we can but I make no promises I won't break some of your records."

Billy ran his fingers through his hair and grinned grabbing his stuff and walking out. Looking back he called to him before he left.

"I'll get your address from Tommy and Carol. I'll meet you there with the goods after I drop off Max. But then I have a date after so don't expect me to stay and do any sappy male bonding with you. I don't swing that way, pretty boy."

Steve scoffed at that comment narrowing his eyes and closed his locker grabbing his things to go home.

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Nikki sat on Mandy's bed listening patiently to her talk all about how she felt about Billy Hargrove. The look her friend got on her face as they talked told her it was much more dire than she had originally thought.

"So... you really don't like him then? Absolutely no feelings not even lust?" Nikki asked as Mandy paced in her room.

"For the umpteenth time, Nikki, no. Not a single one other than pure loathing. I need to make the feeling mutual so he will back off and leave me alone." Mandy groaned and flopped on her bed with Nikki frowning at her and then petting her head gently to comfort her.

"But... I read in cosmo that sometimes when a boy and girl tease each other, like play games with one another, it actually means they like each other. Even if it seems mean or hostile sometimes anger cloaks the desire they have for one another because they are too shy or confused to admit it."

Mandy groaned at her friend loudly.



"Okay... okay. You don't like him. I got it. Loud and clear." Nikki put her hands up surrendering and folding to her friends point of view. Deep down she didn't fully believe it but for Mandy's sake she went along with it and didn't question it."

"I don't know how to describe it, Nikki. I mean of course my normal teenage hormones are present for this but that doesn't mean I like it or want it. It's sort off.. involuntary and it just happens. I hate it. I really do. I don't want to feel this way. Feelings suck!" She lightly yelled into her pillow and then lay still basking in the feeling of being completely lost.

"Speaking of feelings... what are you going to do about Tucker? I mean, Mandy, it's so obvious he is into you as well. My goodness, my baby is growing up. She has two boys all vying for her affection!" Nikki laughed sounding like a proud mother talking to her daughter.

"Try again. Three. Tommy still won't back off from staring at me either."

"He's still on that kick? I would have thought he would drop it since he has split with Carol and has been hanging around with Vicki a lot. He sure loves his redheads." Nikki pondered on this seeing just how opposite Mandy was from Carol or Vicki."

"Yeah well, he apparently hasn't gotten that memo yet, Nikki, because yes he still stares at me every chance he gets. As if Billy isn't bad enough, and the trouble with my eventual slicing and dicing of Tucker's feelings, Tommy is a flat out creeper. I detest him and it really makes me sick to my stomach every time he stares at me."

Nikki patted her head and sighed putting her finger to her lips looking up at the ceiling as if thinking about what she could do to fix it for her friend. She really hated seeing Mandy this distressed. Any other girl would feel blessed and honored to get so much attention but for a shy girl like Mandy this was obviously putting her on emotional overload.

"Yeah... I got nothing. I don't know what to do about Tommy. But I do know that if he doesn't stop I may have to kick his ass." Nikki flexed her arms as if to prove her point and Mandy looked up finally

able to smile and laugh a little bit.

"My hero!" She said sarcastically making Nikki beam.

"I guess I will just have to let Tucker tell me what he wants to say and then let him down as gently as I possibly can. But... if he gets weird about it, will that ruin our circle of friendship, Nik?" Mandy was distraught over that and she could read it all over her face.

"No, of course not. Alex and I will still love you both and be fully supportive of your time trying to sort this all out. I promise. It won't be weird at all. I will try and help and talk to Tucker too if I can."

"Thank you, Nikki. You're the best." They pulled each other into a tight hug and sat there like that for a moment.

"But Billy..." Nikki started and Mandy stiffened up just hearing his name.

"Sorry." Nikki said feeling sheepish for bringing it up again.

"I will just have to push him away over and over again until he finally gets the hint that I am not interested." Mandy sighed and moved out of the hug sitting on her bed with her hands in her lap looking down.

"It was so wrong of him to openly flirt like that with me. With Tina being no more than ten feet away." She ran her fingers through her long dark hair and felt herself getting worked up over it again.

"Yeah, that is pretty crass. Well... stick to your guns, Mandy. I am sure eventually he will get bored and saunter off to go steal another heart. I know yours is an impenetrable fortress and that you won't give it out easy." Nikki winked and Mandy nodded. She knew her so well.

"Now, come on. Let's go raid your fridge. You NEED ice cream and you need it FAST. You can swim if off later at the pool party." Nikki giggled and took her hand pulling her towards her bedroom door to go downstairs and dig into the Cherries Jubilee ice cream they both loved so much.

The rest of the night they watched a sitcom together to laugh over ice cream that melted almost as fast as Mandy's troubles. After a few hours she said goodnight to Nikki and then headed upstairs to check on Calvin. He was fast asleep in his bed worn out from his first day back at school. She shut the door smiling softly and went to her own room to read for a little while and think on everything.

Mandy would have to figure out a way to push Billy away, dodge Tommy, and try to maintain her friendship with Tucker. This was absolutely testing her limits but she would do her best.

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## **5. The Broken Boy-Madmax-The Thunderdome**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

### **Chapter 5 - THE BROKEN BOY - MAD MAX - & THE THUNDERDOME**

**Summary:**

**BILLY REFLECTS. (lots of angsty confused deep thoughts)**

Thoughts on the new town, new school, his new "friends" aka followers and worshippers, and some new girl he randomly has first period English with. He recalls everything about her and how it made him feel when being around her. He thinks about what he plans to do with her but something makes him feel off about her. He cannot quite place it but he's sure damn gonna try.

Billy cant stop thinking about Mandy though even if he continues flirting with other girls, taking them out on dates, and when he goes to bed at night its her face he sometimes sees and dreams about. Why? Shes just a girl for him to ruin. She means NOTHING. He decides then and there to have her, seduce her,

and sleep with her so he can move on and forget her and get her out of his head because she is driving him nuts constantly being on his brain.

Max pisses him off being late to show up to his car which makes both of them late to come home. It's really not much of a home to come home to. Everytime she makes him late its HIS ass on the line with Neil not hers. Their relationship is strained because of this and even deeper things he doesn't want to think about.

Returning to Neil's house, which he has dubbed the "Thunderdome", he has to deal with his father then retires for the night to sleep. Tomorrow after school he starts his first day at the Hawkins community pool and has no idea what to expect. Neil has given him a pass to not have to pick up Max when he has to go to work right after school but he still has to take her out where she wants on weekends or on his days off.

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Billy didn't see the girl with the deep ocean eyes again after he took off to shower at the end of practice.

Feeling proud of himself for easily manipulating Steve he quickly got dressed and made his way out to the school parking lot. Tommy gave him the address and took off to go do his own thing telling him he would see him later.

He wasn't blind. He noticed Tommy staring at Mandy in the gym. It invoked some sort of primal feeling in him but he couldn't put a finger on it. He was far more desperate to put his fingers on and in Mandy Hawkins and like hell would he let Tommy beat him to it.

Frustrated at not being able to find her out here he unlocked his Camaro and threw his gym bag in the back. Keeping the door open and sitting sideways in his driver's seat he lit up a smoke and waited for Maxine to show up.

If the little shit was late again he would be absolutely pissed. Billy was tired of taking Neil's crap because of her piss poor attitude and

her lack of punctuality. Max knew the rules and he laid down the law with her quite clearly and yet she still found ways to make him suffer at the hands of his old man and played games.

Thinking back to the girl he met today he almost curled his lips into a smile when he recalled how she had helplessly pressed herself against her locker when he stood before her. He felt powerful and in control with her. All the other girls just melted right into his hands and arms willingly which left him no satisfaction of the chase. But Mandy was different. She was resisting him.

When they locked eyes, he had felt some sort of magnet pull him to her the moment he laid his icy blue ones onto hers and it had sent a jolt of hot white electricity throughout his body. When it struck him he almost stopped breathing for a second. Her eyes made him think of things he didn't want to so he let his eyes roam her body instead.

But no matter how hard he tried to avoid them and look at her anatomy, he just kept looking right back into her deep green orbs realizing they almost paralyzed him. They reminded him of something far away that he pined for. Reminded him of his beloved oceans and waves back home in California, perhaps? Maybe they had somewhat started making him homesick.

*Yeah, that has to be it. She has eyes like the ocean and I just miss California and the beach. That's all. Nothing to it.* He thought dismissively as he took a long drag from his cigarette enjoying the feel and taste of the smoke.

Her sea green eyes, almost like two precious tidal emeralds, were hauntingly beautiful as he beheld them for the very first time. They were emblazoned on his memory now but it wasn't the same seeing them in a memory, dulled with time, when compared to seeing them in real time and in person. The memory can fade and become skewered and incorrect more and more as time passes and the memory fades. But her eyes were definitely unforgettable and left an impression on him. It angered him to not understand why.

All he knew is he had to see her again and corner her, even if only to figure her out. Until he did this would definitely bother him to no end. With new resolve to track down the newest object of his lusty

ambitions and conquer her, he would look for her every chance he got while wandering the campus in between bells.

He would spend his lunch time trying to track her down to work her up even more. He would get her hot and bothered and ready for him so he could claim what he wanted from her. The rumors be damned, he would see to it she would give in to him and he would break her one way or another.

While wandering the school today he was asking people questions and directions to familiarize his new territory. Memorizing every mile of it like a wolf would map out it's territory for a den and before hunting it's prey.

He would love to skip or ditch but if he started that shit here, Neil would be on him in no time to punish him for fucking up a second chance out here. He had horrible grades and attendance back in California and had been in so many fights that the move was carried out by his old man as a latch ditch effort to control him completely. To force him into unfamiliar territory thinking he wouldn't make it.

Well, he would prove him wrong. He could take the man out of the beach but he wouldn't take the beach out of the man. He hated this fucking town and all the hick people in it. The girls were fat or dogs here, besides Tina anyway, and he was tired of looking for scraps instead of a nice juicy steak to chew on.

He missed the warm sands, the ocean spray and salty smell of the beach. He missed his actual real friends on the West Coast that were like him in so many ways he didn't have to act or hide but could be himself around them and they accepted him. Everything about Hawkins, Indiana screamed the death of his sanity and his enjoyment.

Well, Tina wasn't the only one that got his attention if he were honest with himself.

He thought again of Mandy and the first true moment he gazed deeply into her ocean like eyes when she was against her locker and he had closed in to get a good look at her in the hall. He took in all of her then. Her lovely eyes, full pink pouting lips, her long soft black

hair finely accenting her fair pale skin.

She barely said a word to him at first until thanking him for helping with her locker. He didn't want her thanks he wanted her to swoon. But once he realized she wouldn't it excited him even more. When she begged him to move aside and let her go it was all he could do to keep from grinning and enjoying trapping her there.

He saw how fired up she got over it and it made him satisfied. One small 'thanks' barely a whisper and then she was suddenly spurning him and walking away angrily. He liked her like that deciding then and there he didn't want her easy like all the other girls that fell at his feet.

Billy recalled how she had stiffened up in class when he whispered against her neck. The same way she had gone stiff against the locker. But it didn't seem like fear because there was want in her eyes mixed with confusion... or perhaps something else?

Her body, from what he could tell, was shapely and definitely doable. The skirt accented her hips and her ass just right which he got a great view of as she walked away from him. Her outfit had shown decently how well shaped she was in her torso and her chest. It was odd for him to enjoy such a view because in all his years, the soft quiet shy nerdy type had never been his type at all, yet there she was turning him on and looking good despite her odd style and appearance.

He supposed it was the expression she got on her face when he backed her up against her locker to open it for her. She had gazed up into his eyes with an unknowable unrecognizable emotion but if he had to guess it would be desire mixed with hesitation. Something else in her eyes he couldn't quite make out.

There was no lust in her eyes for him, which had made him wonder most of all. Every girl that had ever gazed upon his face or his body had that look. But hers was more a trapped panic, a desire to flee, coupled with a need to understand or figure him out.

It was as if she was searching into his eyes for something. She had spared a glance at his tight good looking ass as he walked by but even then it was more out of curiosity than out of a desire to try and



own him and his physical perfection. He didn't let any female delude herself into thinking they could own him. He owned the girls he chased until he was sick of them, simple as that.

Each time she pulled her eyes away from him it made a part of him ache inside to look into them again. A painful withdraw had struck him from her absence somehow, hitting him deep down inside the core of his very being.

He was pleasantly surprised to see her again at the gym watching him move all over the court. He supposed she was pissed about him tormenting Steve but if it made her hot for him, so be it.

She looked so surprised when he used her first name. Most likely she didn't know he could hear some of what her and her friend were saying in the hallway while flirting openly with Tina to get to her. Tina was pretty for sure, but he mostly did it to get under Mandy's skin and show her just how desirable he was.

In class he saw her passing notes with her friend and oh how fun it would have been for him to find a way to get his hands on one of them to read them to her out loud when he cornered her all alone. He could only guess they were about him, despite his ego being almost sure of it, since she was stealing glances at him as she read them.

What a pity that English class in the morning was their only class together. Tina was all over him every chance she got and while it made him feel wanted and inflated his ego, it was quickly getting on his nerves, but if he wanted to play then he had to pay.

He had asked the cute yet outspoken chick who gave him her number all too easily about the girl earlier during break between classes. She looked crestfallen and maybe a little jealous and insecure when he did.

He was smoking at the corner of the school with all the other misfits, Tommy and Carol included, and the party people of Hawkins High when he asked. Tina decided to just tag along with him uninvited. She was cute but way too social, extremely flirty and talkative. She had laughed incredulously almost to the point of scoffing while

asking him why he wanted to know about Mandy.

This was just her making a statement that she could show him a far better time than any other girl at this dump of a school. Her laughter and the way she teasingly touched him couldn't mask her off put and hurt feelings either. It was apparent to him that this girl, Mandy Hawkins, literally was simply a little nobody and wasn't part of the popular crowd that he was working his way into.

When he had looked for her during lunch while walking around to familiarize himself with the school grounds and hallways he had decided he would have to wait to see her tomorrow morning and try again twice as hard to get to her. A part of him hated her for making him want to see her and mess with her head so badly. It wasn't really like him at all to fixate on any one girl, ever.

By lunch time the rumors were going around that there would be a party at Steve Harrington's place and Tina also invited herself to that with him as well. Tina was clearly the better choice and more ready for him to do unimaginable things to her in his car for an amazing afterparty delight. So why choose someone who seemingly had no interest over one who did? Still, he could not get the raven haired porcelain skinned girl out of his mind. Her cattiness had only piqued his interest even more.

He found himself rehearsing and thinking up things he could say to get into her panties or at least get them in a bunch over him. Either she was very good at hiding under a rock away from everyone else or she was very actively and specifically avoiding him.

Usually he could blow it off and move on to other potentials or distract himself with someone ditzy and willing, like Tina, but for some reason he could not get this Mandy Hawkins girl out of his head.

She was nothing like the girls in his magazines or posters that he often sweated to at night, but maybe that's what he liked about her. She was unique and dare he think even kind of beautiful in a strange way he couldn't figure out. Everything about her should be making him scream in hatred of her and be repulsed. She dressed like a widow or a grandma. But when the hoodie was off, he saw that she

had something going for her and to work with body wise.

Billy found it slightly interesting that her last name was the same as the shit town he wound up in but he didn't care to ask too much about that.

Eventually he tried to block out whatever it is that was going on inside of him about this strange girl. It felt like a battle between his sexual needs and desires for something different than his usual tastes and something else he couldn't repress or name.

So in his mind, he resolved to be determined to get her into his car or in his room alone with him. Any girl in Hawkins would basically do to satiate his urges but no matter where he went he found himself planning things for her.

Picturing her in his mind how she looked when they last met and how she had pressed herself back against the locker flattening herself as far away from him as she could, he wondered how he could have repulsed her so. No girl did that to a good looking guy like him. It was a strange reaction to see, she clearly wasn't normal. He would like to tell himself it was because of the intensity of his flirty presence but he knew that wasn't quite right.

He had to admit, a part of that made him feel powerful to corner her and see that look in her eyes. He knew the affect he had on girls, even older women. But when he looked into those deep green eyes of hers he didn't see the usual response. He saw avoidance and disgust. He saw her holding back something from him. A sort of trapped need like his own begging to come out only unlike him she wouldn't allow it.

It was as if she was keeping the best part of herself away from him, guarding and protecting it. Keep her thoughts or feelings locked up tight out of his reach. Dangling it there to see but not letting him absorb any of them.

She was strong. Stubborn. Willful. She resisted. It made him almost have respect for her in a strange way. He just bet she truly was just like all the others deep down despite her mask of innocence she tried to use on him. If she thought she could fight him eventually he would

win and take what he wanted from her.

Not by force, he wasn't into that and knew better. But by coercion and causing her willingness to slowly unfold until she yielded to him. But the fires of intelligence that burned in her eyes said otherwise. This would be an uphill battle and the fight of his life if he truly wished to pursue this. To pursue her.

If she did want him and was only playing games with him, she was hiding it very well. Almost as well as she hid her figure underneath all those damn baggy clothes she wore. He noticed seeing that was a hundred times better than it all being on display for him. He loved to imagine her soft supple body beneath all of those layers for himself.

Most girls showed off their skin for him. Painted their faces up. Did their hair just right. Even putting on extra perfume so he could smell it on them when they got close to him to flirt back. She had a natural soft and fragrant scent that couldn't come from a bottle. It was pure innocence that he picked up on from her with all of his senses.

This of course, was impossible to him. No girl was pure like that. At some point in their lives even pre high school or during, their innocence is taken, and that is the simple fact of reality. One of the many things his father had told him. According to Neil, all girls are whores who play the virgin. All girls are begging to go for that ride in the car but like to pretend they are higher class than that.

He couldn't imagine why he was becoming so unhinged by some mousey female he hadn't even gotten the chance to press his mouth against let alone his hands either. She was a mystery wrapped up in mysteries and it was beginning to crawl into his brain and scratch around in there bothering him all day. So simple, so plain, and yet so beautiful at the same time.

How could she have this kind of effect on him on a first meeting? Never in his life had he been so obsessed with the idea of breaking a girl in. Tina was gorgeous but she was far too simple and easy to figure out. Too easy to win over and was even eager to be the girl on his arm and the girl that would wind up in the back of his car.

Most girls he fancied or went after were all lovely and exotic but for

him to have these intense desires for a plain looking girl like Mandy and to feel so broken and laid bare before her eyes was ridiculous.

He felt like he was trying to hide something deeper within himself from her with his cocky and perverted behavior only to have her see right through him. It bewildered him. He had to shake this off and get it out of his mind. He bet that once he had a simple taste of her things would go back to normal for him and he would drop it.

A female was only desirable for him during the thrill of the chase and then conquering them so they would give him what he wanted from them. But once he had his way that was when the desire quickly faded and he moved on to the next while he ruined the last one for anyone else.

After being with him, they would never be able to be with another man quite the same way again because every time they rutted with some other guy they would think only of him and what he did to them. He was damn good in bed and he knew that as well.

The big turn off for a lot of them was he didn't want commitment to them. No girl sprung him enough to make him even slightly crave that. He was not relationship or boyfriend material. He was not the guy you would bring home to mother. Nor the guy you made matrimony plans with. He only dealt in one night stands. Love them and dump them. Wham, bam.

So how could this insignificant ordinary little nobody like Mandy possibly make his head spin or feel eager to close the deal with her? Getting close to her in the hallway had him turned on and in heat for her but he hadn't shown it.

He was good at masking his true emotions replacing them with something else over the top. He could hide the anxious quivering and trembling of his body as it shuddered for her. He could use disdain, mockery, and his flirtatious qualities to mask it. But her look almost put him in a spotlight as if she could sense his need for her.

Had she caught onto his game? Saw through to his intentions? Had Mandy realized that he could offer her no more than bodily pleasure for one night and he was too willing to give it? Or did she see past

that and instead saw something in him that was worth her time enough for her to linger? She had to have come to the gym to see him. And if not, she did stay to watch, that was obvious.

These questions were really throwing him around and he could feel the pangs of physical need as well as the claws of frustration rake over him for her. Billy hated the idea of love. It was cheesy and stupid. Lust and sex were better. Instant gratification. He didn't believe in soulmates. Nor did he believe he would ever want that with anyone. That part of him had died long ago.

Love was a weakness. He learned that from his father all too well. To love someone was to open yourself up to their toxicity, their poison, and their eventual hatred that would rip that love apart and leave it lying on the floor bleeding and broken. His mother also had taught him that love was meaningless when she abandoned him and left him to the cruelty of his father.

As he sat on the hood of his car waiting for Max, pondering these useless terminologies and worthless notions of feelings, he smoked his cigarette so far down to the filter it burned his fingers and shook him out of it. Cussing at himself and stomping out the cigarette with his boots and glared. It was simple. He had simply had a temporary moment of weakness and self doubt and he wouldn't let it happen again.

Cali girls were super easy too although very sexy. Mandy didn't look like those girls. She didn't that look in her eyes they did when gazing at him either. No obvious lust, need, ache, hunger, none of that. Just aversion to him and cold curiosity.

Shrugging it off he squashed his own churning turmoil of emotions and thoughts. Stone faced and cold hearted he reminded himself that having such thoughts would do nothing to fix the deep wounds and scars that were on the inside. The external ones he could handle and would heal with enough neosporin, bactine, ace bandaging, and bags of ice or frozen peas. The other ones from within he would hold onto and keep them as a neverending reminder that love and tenderness didn't exist and was simply a delusion for fools.

He was no fool. His father didn't raise a lovesick puppy he raised a

man. He taught him that the strong devoured the weak and that a man takes what he wants when he wants and gives nothing in return if he can help it.

This was how he would protect himself from the poisonous enemy known as "love" that festered in ones mind and causes those who succumbed to it to be destroyed from within. It takes over the mind and body leaving them a host, a pathetic shell of a former man, and controls their every thought and action waking or sleeping. The only antidote for this was its counterpart. Lust. Lust was all he knew and it was easy enough to figure out. His lust often coupled with hate made it even easier.

So just as he used Tina and all the other no name girls that weren't important in his life, so too would he use Mandy and get rid of these ridiculous notions that it could be anything deeper or more meaningful than that.

His thoughts were interrupted, finally, by his stepsister Maxine, as she noisily came skateboarding over to his car. For once he was thankful to see the brat if even only to distract him from his deep dark thoughts.

"What did we talk about, Max?"

He said angrily his teeth on edge. In addition to his ire for her being late it was also mixed with a curious hint of pent up frustration over his interaction with the girl he met today at school. It was a little off and he didn't feel as icy and aggressive with Max as he usually was.

"Not to be late." She didn't look him in his eyes simply stared at the pavement.

She said in a monotonous flat voice barely able to hide her hatred and recoil that she felt toward him. He was a powder keg and the match could be struck at anytime to set him off. She feared him but she loathed him as well.

"Next time you're late you can skate home. Don't make me tell you again." He said as he pulled out another cigarette and lit it.

Taking one last look around in the lot giving up on seeing Mandy again he finally had a screw it attitude and just wanted to leave. He ordered Max to get into the car because both of them being late meant another lecture, chastising, and possible punishment from his father. Not to Max. But to him.

Neil and his son had a talk about respect and responsibility, but most of the talking had been done the only way his old man knew how to do it... with physical violence.

Max was not worth getting beat for so she could either wise up or he would put the same fear in her that Neil put into him and make her see that to get him whooped meant she would also share in those consequences. He may not desire to physically lay a hand on her but he could emotionally terrorize her all the same if she didn't get with the program.

"Okay. Whatever. I'm sorry."

His step sister looked down at the ground angrily practically tossing her skateboard into the backseat pissing him off that she might scuff up the leather. Getting into his car quickly not wishing to set him off or worsen his temper she did as she was told. She had learned that lesson the hard way the last time she didn't obey and he broke her skateboard as punishment for it.

She couldn't tell Neil or her mom because that would just make it even worse and then Billy would come down even harder on her making her even more miserable than he already did. So she had to suck it up and save up some of her allowance to buy a new one telling them she had accidentally broke it while doing a trick on it she wasn't quite skilled enough in. She took the heat for wasting money to spare Billy being the cause not even knowing why she would do that for him.

"Easy on the leather, dipshit! Watch the attitude or you can find your own way home starting right now. I'm too damn tired for this. Let's get out of this shit hole. I've had a long first day and I'm so fuckin' done once we get home. Neil's gonna bust my ass for this, I swear to God, Max."



She looked over and dared to give him some sass with her bright blue eyes glaring at him holding nothing but utter contempt.

"What... no bimbo high school girls to take out tonight for a makeout session and then dump later? That would explain why you're in such a WONDERFUL mood."

She was scowling, dripping sarcasm, with apparent distaste for his practices and habits. Max couldn't possibly fathom the extent of what he did with the high school girls but it definitely didn't stop at a makeout session. Her knowledge and imagination was so tame and limited. She would find out when she was older, if a boy was lucky to touch her as long as he was around. But nonetheless, although it was meant as a sassy comment just to poke fun at him, it still hit home in his pride.

He knew it wasn't like him to strike out with a chick not even on the first day of school in a new town let alone a new state. He had tried to hook Tina but she said she was busy with homework and he snorted in disgust over it. She was hot, talkative, but boring if she found school work to be more important or interesting than him.

Looking at Max with a small snarl he turned up the volume on the radio to his Metallica mix tape and pushed his lips out angrily into a hard line, his nostrils slightly flaring. He blasted his speakers up all the way so he didn't have to listen to her mocking jabs or her attempt to tell him how he was driving. Putting his hand to his ear that was closest to her he mocked that he couldn't hear her as he let the sound drown everything out between them. He gave her no quarter to cry for him to slow down, turn down the music, do this, or do that. No one told him what to do.

He got enough of that from Neil, whom he obeyed on a dime much to his displeasure, but he wouldn't take that shit from her or the girls he dated. He wouldn't take anyone's shit, really. Not even the school teachers, principal, or anyone else. Hell he wouldn't even take shit from a pig if they decided to pull him over for a speeding ticket. He'd pay it from his new lifeguard job's savings but even then the cops could kiss his ass as far as he was concerned.

They drove like that for a few minutes until she got the hint to shut

up and then he switched it off to think while concentrating on the road that lead to "home". If home was in fact what he could call the cold prison cell he was trapped in.

He still sorely missed California. This crap town of Hawkins would never replace what he left behind, and unlike Max, he vowed to himself he would never let it grow on him nor would he make any friends here.

Billy didn't need to make friends. He would just make followers. bad boys, bad girls, party people. Animals like him just to amuse him and worship him and his godlike ego. He didn't care if people liked him he just cared if they feared him and obeyed him. Tina was already pissing him off by not falling in line but he would remain sweet on her until he could break her down and have her begging for him to take her out for a ride with him at the Quarry.

He had sped up out of the school lot originally but then he slowed down after a few miles. Normally he wouldn't care if he were speeding and breaking the law but until he got a police scanner going and knew the area better mapping it all out in his head he didn't want to run into the infamous Chief Jim Hopper of the Hawkins PD.

Turning to Max he had said something snarky about the smell of cow shit everywhere and how the high school girls looked like cows themselves and it made Max roll her eyes and stare out the window to avoid looking at him.

As he drove home through the long country road toward Neil's house he thought of the first moment he laid eyes on Mandy. How she had looked at him when he was standing by his car as the movers unloaded the truck.

Grinning he took joy in knowing it wouldn't be too hard to find her at all if not at school. She had walked out the front door of the house opposite to his. They were neighbors. He could make an excuse to go to her door any day of the week.

He remembered how she saw him outside when he was pissed glaring at Neil over the move. He was always angry but he chose to hide it unless someone cracked at his mask bringing it out in the open. Still,

he tried to hide that side of himself from the girls he was attempting to bait hook, line, and sinker for a date and a little bit of awkward fumbling around in the back of his car at night.

He put on an act for them pretending to be happy. It was an act to get them to think he had actual feelings. He would have to keep his charade up for Mandy if he wanted to get on her good side so he couldn't let her see his anger or anything that went on between him and his old man. He would have to be careful.

Once again he found his musings going back to her. He thought about how Mandy almost smiled when he had played dare devil in his Camaro showing off for her but had tried to keep her eyes forward as if she didn't care.

Why was he thinking about her so much? She just kept creeping back into his thoughts like a dark tentacle taking over everything it could worm its way into within him. He snorted out loud without realizing he had done it and it made his step sister notice.

Max looked over to him wondering why he was being so quiet instead of taunting her like he usually did with how he drove. Instead of being cruel, crazy, or obnoxious to her, he simply had his hands on the steering wheel with his knuckles tightly curled around it.

His face was forward and his look stern and in deep thought or concentration. She didn't dare say anything to him that might pull him out of it and make him turn his attention back on to her. She was enjoying the break from his antagonistic attitude so she sat silently the rest of the ride home.

He wasn't speeding. He wasn't blasting his stereo. He wasn't being his usual angsty self at all. He was thinking about the way Mandy's body had stiffened when he first whispered to her in their shared English class together. It was so obvious a response that he knew why she did it.

Either he turned her gears... or he repulsed her. Such a strange thing to happen since any other girl would have shuddered and then turned to be at full attention enjoying his flirting with them.

His scoffing laugh made Max's eyebrows screw up in surprise not expecting him to do that out of no where. She looked back out the window trying to let it be. Max had felt for a long time her step brother was going slowly insane. He had a few screws loose for sure and she was counting down to when he would completely lose it. She only hoped it wouldn't be on her or her mother Susan when he did.

As Billy kept driving lost in thought he hated how one question would lead to another. If Mandy was repulsed by him, why did he see a need in her eyes or see her allow him to stay so close to her before taking off? She had lingered and actually talked to him with nothing but spite in her words for him.

Her mouth was brazen and sharp but her eyes were looking at him as if she wanted to know him. It was that kind of thing he never wanted to see in a woman's eyes as he flirted with them for a hookup. And yet there it was plain as day. She wanted him but she wouldn't allow herself to get close or to show it. Undeniably underneath her resistance was a kind of curiosity but with a need to keep him at arms length and put her icy walls up.

Before he knew it, his car approached the driveway of the new house and he almost passed it while lost deep in his own thoughts.

Making a sudden stop, Max pitching forward slightly, she called him a jerk and flipped him off while eagerly jumping out with her backpack slung over one shoulder and her skateboard under her other arm.

His only response was to sit for a few seconds his hands still on the wheel but as his anger at her grew he quickly got out of his Camaro slamming his door locking it then walking around the front of it to start following Max. She was walking down the drive angrily away from him. He had grimaced in anger when Max flipped him the bird when she thought he wasn't paying attention and then had stormed up towards the back door.

Even when he left her alone and drove normal and quiet with her in the car she was still wasn't satisfied and had a bad attitude towards him.

"I saw that, shitbird. Keep flippin' that at me and I might break it off."

He said it viciously after taking a short drag on his cigarette then flicked it embers and all in her general direction just barely missing her backside as she continued to walk away. He knew he wouldn't and that it was an empty threat but he wanted her to think he would.

Max left him outside for a bit to collect his thoughts before attempting to enter into his father's house. He knew what was coming and he wasn't in the mood to face it just yet. Eventually he would have to walk into the Thunderdome and battle his insane old man just like he did almost every day and almost every night.

He turned his head to look up at the house across the street. Lights were on but the window curtains and blinds were closed in what he assumed to be Mandy's room upstairs that faced his house's back driveway and backyard. The princess must have it so nice to come home to an actual family that gave a shit about her. It made him angry to think about that. To think about how she most likely had parents who loved her and a warm safe home she could always run to. It made him bitter and he slightly hated her for it.

Before he resigned himself to his fate, he recalled the innocent look Mandy gave him when he leaned in to pop her locker for her. That familiar tentacle crawling back into his head making him shift uncomfortably before heading into the house to deal with his dad's bullshit.

He walked through the back door slowly and braced himself for the inevitable.

Neil was in the living room watching his usual sports channel and drinking a beer. Billy counted the cans. There were at least three empty and crushed with his father working on his fourth. This was not going to be easy today.

"Well... looks like my good for nothing son has finally decided to grace us with his presence." He started in with an already eager tone of voice thirsty for blood.

"I'm sorry I was late bringing Max home, dad." He replied while

standing still and looking Neil in his eyes. His father hated it if he didn't look him in the eyes.

"Wanna try that again the proper way this time?" Neil said his rage bubbling beneath the surface barely curbed by his obvious mild intoxication.

"I'm sorry I was late bringing Max home, SIR." Billy corrected himself. He had slipped yet again. Anything even less than that would warrant a swift kick in his ass. Neil also hated it when Billy didn't refer to him with his proper title out of respect.

"That's better. You will respect me as your father and address me properly."

He said with an icy tone of voice laced with mild slurring and Billy winced at the familiarity of how his father kept tight control over him. What he could say. What he could do. Where he could go. When he could come home and when to leave.

It was why he often snuck out for his dates or to party and had to sneak back in timing it just right so Neil wouldn't notice.

Sometimes it worked. Sometimes it landed him fresh bruises and cuts that Billy would claim were earned during a fight with another boy at school or off campus.

"Now. Care to tell me WHY you both are late coming home for supper? Care to explain to Susan as well and apologize to her for making her wait? She's been slaving over the stove for you for two hours now and you don't even have the decency to show up on time for our family dinner?"

Susan looked at Neil, then to Billy, then back to her husband. She was fidgeting and waiting for what usually happened next depending on Billy's answer.

"It's alright, Neil, there are plenty of leftovers. I don't mind." She shifted her eyes nervously not wanting another confrontation and tried to smile softly.

"No, it's not alright, Susan. This boy of mine needs to learn respect

and punctuality."

Neil gritted his teeth. Before he could get up and close in on the space between him and his wayward son with intent to teach him that lesson, staggering most likely in the process, Max suddenly rushed out of her room and taking one look at Billy frozen there she turned to speak to Neil trying to be very sweet.

"I'm sorry, daddy. It's my fault. I got caught up talking with some of my new friends from school in the Hawkins AV lab. I'm sorry. It won't happen again. I promise."

Neil's face softened a bit as he debated whether or not to believe this but pleased all the same she had referred to him as her father. Funny how she didn't have to call him Sir.

Hearing Max call this piece of shit 'daddy' and being sweet to him made Billy's stomach churn. She had layered it on thick to calm him down. They all knew Neil wasn't her father but both he and Susan demanded she call him dad or daddy in order to further cement that they were all a family now. Max didn't like it but it's clear she did it for Billy to keep the peace.

Billy looked at her stunned that she would step up and say something. She gave him a look back as if telling him to keep his mouth shut and let her explain. He remained silent but his body still rigid with nervous tension.

Neil's suspicious glazed eyes flitted back and forth between them. He knew he could say nothing if Max claimed the responsibility. He was an asshole but he wasn't stupid.

"I just got so caught up in hanging out with them I didn't notice the time and I came late to get in the Camaro so we could come home."

She had spun the lie so smoothly it made Billy almost admire her bravery at having the nerve to lie to Neil.

"Well, Max. You will just have to try harder to keep an eye on the time, then." Neil said softening his tone as Susan eyed him while bringing out the leftovers and fixing plates for Max and Billy. She

immediately breathed out a soft sigh of relief.

Max smiled to Neil and then took one look at Billy seeing the confusion in his eyes with a stone face on to hide it as she went to the bathroom to wash up for dinner.

"As you were then. Go wash your hands and eat. If you have plans for tonight, Billy, make sure you are home at a reasonable hour. It's a school night and you also start your new job tomorrow after school. I will have Susan pick up Max when you're working but the weekends are still yours to deal with. I busted my ass to set this up for you so don't fuck it up. Make sure you get there on time. It's time you start chipping in around here and help with the bills and pay your own car payment and your own gas. I'm not carrying your lazy ass anymore."

Susan frowned prepping the table but kept her silence. Even she knew better than to argue with him, whether she was his wife or not, when he was like this. Especially when he was drinking.

Neil dismissed him scratching his belly sitting back down on the couch and letting out a small burp from all the beer he had been drinking.

Stiff and relieved at the same time he walked to his room and put his gym bag down on the carpet. Max peeked in his room through the crack of the door seeing him just stand there for a moment collecting himself. His back muscles tense. She frowned and went back to washing up for dinner.

Billy may be an ass but she didn't like how Neil treated him and if she could prevent it, she would. She knew he would never say thank you or ask her why but she didn't care. If it could prevent a huge fight in their house she would take the blame as often as possible to calm everything down.

They all joined each other at the table to eat and it was a strained uncomfortable silence between them. Billy didn't say a word and when done he then asked to be excused so he could shower and go to bed. Susan pardoned him but asked for help cleaning up the dishes and he complied not wanting to anger his father if he declined. Max retired to her room once more and the house was silent tonight. It



had been a nice break from what usually went on in this house.

Once Neil was content with passing out on the couch and Susan had served them all dinner, Billy helped to clean the dishes and wipe down the counters and table. He then showered and cleaned himself up for bed. He walked slowly into his room passing Max's bedroom.

She was playing music softly in her room and more than likely had her door locked but he didn't really care as he had no intentions of going in there.

He almost paused there at her door and wanted to knock to tell her something but he shook his head and decided against it. Just because she helped him avoid a fight with Neil didn't mean he owed her shit or had to like her. She was a pain in his ass and until he could graduate and move out he would just have to deal.

Max didn't like him anymore than he liked her so what was the point in trying to be nice and cozy as a family now? Years of Neil and Susan favoring her over him was enough to keep his hate and spite of her going. She was a spoiled brat, a real regular princess, and could do whatever she wanted while he had to adhere to strict rules and would get hit and scolded if he even broke one of them.

Entering into his own room and locking his door he flopped down on his bed he put his arms up behind his head. He did his best to shrug off the fear and trembling of what had been a very close one with Neil. Finally calming down he lay there looking at the ceiling. For a split moment he thought once or twice about bringing out one of his racey magazines to help him relax and sort out his uncomfortable pangs of need and stress but decided not to. He was too damn tired to take care of it.

When his head hit the pillow for sleep he replayed the last encounter with her when she stormed off angry at him. Behind the anger there was something else hiding underneath. Much like how underneath her plain and thick clothing there was more waiting to be discovered.

He licked his lips imagining his hands running over and under her layers to find what secrets she held for him. It was almost better than any airbrushed magazine girl because this was REAL and not dolled

up designed to get men's blood pumping and their hearts racing.

When he had looked into her big green eyes she had looked at him as if seeing him for the first time. Even more, she had looked at him as if TRULY seeing him. Which is something no one else has ever done before. She had looked right through him as if staring into his very soul.

Most people looked past him and lusted after him lingering their eyes on his body. Or they gave him looks of hatred or jealousy. When he showed up somewhere with traces of bruises barely covered by his clothing and his sunglasses, the looks he sometimes recieved were those of shock or pity.

Her gaze was different. It was deep and soulful. Her green eyes had beckoned to him the moment he first truly looked into them and it chilled him to the bone almost making him want to walk away.

When sleep came for him, his dreamscapes and nightmarescapes gripped him in the throws of soured memories. Twisted up with fists, and shouting, blood and pain. Images of his imposing father and his soft frightened mother, his REAL mother.

Once those passed, he noticed in the dream he held a flyer in his hand. It was yellow and tattered and he didn't know what the text read on the piece of paper, all he knew was it called to him and told him it would lead him to her.

Talking in his sleep he gripped a phantom note that wasn't there and resolved that somehow, someway, he would see her again. Even if just to make damn sure that this was not what he thought it was. Just another random connection with no meaning behind it. That she was nothing to him but a plaything.

And as the note blew away in the wind he saw his mother's face and it slowly morphed into hers. The beautiful long blond hair and smiling narrow face changing before his dreamscape eyes into Mandy's fuller face with her dark long raven hair and her sea green eyes. His mother's eyes almost just like her green ones with very little change at all. Sun kissed skin exchanged for pale soft milky white skin.

\* \* \* \* \*

## **6. Sweetest Tongue Holds Sharpest Tooth**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

**Chapter 6 - SWEETEST TONGUE HOLDS SHARPEST TOOTH - TUCKER'S CONFESSION**

**Summary:**

Tucker works up the courage to come to Mandy's window at night and confess his feelings to her asking if she feels the same. Mandy tries to be gentle but he makes it so hard to let him down easy and he gets very hurt and upset.

Hurtful words are exchanged and new revelations about Billy and how he thinks of her behind her back are brought to light and to Mandy's attention, further souring her and Tucker's communication and attempt to reconcile.

Why cant they just go back to being good friends? Mandy laments.

.....

After she and Nikki had their ice cream and sitcom bonanza it was time for her friend to go home. They both would need sleep in order to survive another day of high school tomorrow. Nikki seemed to be doing just fine with that. It was more Mandy that needed to reoperate and recharge.

When her parents came home she had dinner with them and her little brother not mentioning she had spoiled it with Cherries Jubilee earlier. They would find the almost empty container eventually but that could be a discussion for later.

After telling them about her first day at school, taking care to avoid any details about all the stressful things that happened and tiptoeing around it, she kissed them goodnight. Walking over to Calvin she played with him pretending to be chomping down on his soft tiny shoulder and neck with her teeth like a shark gently giving kisses and growling making him giggle.

She was exhausted while trying to put up a happy front to her family so they wouldn't worry. Slogging her way up the stairs to her bedroom she was almost too tired to shower and change but she managed just barely.

Throwing on a comfortable white cotton sleeveless night gown that had floral print and came down to her knees, she crawled in bed and turned on her night light. Reaching for her personal copy of Romeo and Juliet, which actually was one of her favorite romance stories of all time even better than her other novels considering, she had read this play at least eighteen times over in her lifetime. She settled on her page she left off at removing the unicorn bookmark gently. Act two scene two.

*JULIET:*

*"How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?"*

*The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,*

*And the place death, considering who thou art,*

*If any of my kinsmen find thee here."*

*ROMEO:*

*"With love's light wings did I o'erperch these walls,*

*For stony limits cannot hold love out,*

*And what love can do, that dares love attempt.*

*Therefore thy kinsmen are no stop to me."*

Mandy smiled at Romeo's determination and bravery to see his fair lady despite all odds, even climbing up on the balcony just to be able to kiss her and pour his feelings out for her. Young pure love was so beautiful and it made her pine wishing she could find her own Romeo that would love her even half as much as Shakespear's loved his Juliet.

Looking around her cozy safe haven she felt better and more relaxed here where no eyes could stare and no one could follow or bother her. Her room was her magical fortress. Her own private castle. She was safe in her tower and instead of a wicked witch or an evil stepmother, she was the only one who locked herself in here.

She would be flattered if a lover would come calling for her but she knew it would never be sweet or with pure intentions. Being in love when so young and only in high school just wasn't plausible or realistic. Even though her parents got lucky to meet in high school and had been sweethearts their entire lives, they were the rare exception to that rule.

Kicking her feet around under the covers to get more comfortable as she read the famous starcrossed duo's exchange, some of her stuffed animals went flying. Despite her enjoyment of their timeless romance, she found herself thinking about the days events and caught her mind drifting elsewhere. She thought of blue eyes and golden curls. She thought of Nikki inviting her to Steve's and her finally saying yes and accepting.

She somewhat smiled to herself at realizing she was actually excited to be going to the pool party. She could not really understand why. With everything that happened today she should be afraid but she

actually felt like she was becoming more and more brave. Growing up just a little bit and finally peeking out of her shell.

While adrift in her thoughts, there was a light tapping sound at her window. She put down her big leatherbound book replacing the marker in her spot and turned to look at the direction of the sound. Realizing someone was at her window outside and on the roof she stared wide eyed for a moment.

*No. No, please no. This cannot be happening. No. Don't answer it. Maybe it will stop and he will go away!*

She silently begged in her head for this to be true. Begged for him to give up and leave. She did NOT want Hargrove coming to her window. That was too bold of him and way out of line! She would just ignore it and turn out her night light pretending to be asleep so he would leave.

Quickly turning off her night light to be in total darkness she waited under the covers almost breathlessly not wanting to make a single sound.

When the sound kept up its pace undeterred and not letting up she sighed angrily and cursed herself for not being faster with the light. With each tapping noise it seemed to grow more and more urgent and a bit louder. She feared the sound waking up her parents who were asleep just next door in the next room over.

Jumping up quickly but quietly she made her way to her window being careful not to make too much noise and pulled aside the curtains then lifting the blinds. Flinging open the window as softly as she could her annoyed expression softened once she saw who was crouching there and her eyes were wide in disbelief.

It was Tucker. She breathed a sigh of relief but this was almost no better than had it have been Billy perched on her roof. He looked into her eyes frowning and he looked an absolute mess to the point of being even frightened to approach her.

"What are you doing here?"

She crossed her arms trying to be irritated but kept her voice down at the same time. His sadness and apprehension was replaced with a boyish grin. He looked so lost and so soft at her that she couldn't stay mad at him. She lowered her arms and moved aside to let him climb in from the roof allowing him access beyond the window into her bedroom.

Mandy glanced at her alarm clock and sighed rolling her eyes.

"Sure... make yourself at home. Because it's totally not two in the morning right now."

She said dryly while waving her hands around as if showcasing her entire room to emphasize it. As he climbed through the window and carefully over the attached couch and its wooden frame connected underneath it he was taking care not to get his dirty shoes on the cushions and her stuffed animals.

It felt like they were little kids all over again. He hadn't done this in a long time but he used to always scale the lattice to get to her roof and tap on her window to be let in. They had spent hours just talking in her room about anything and everything just being close. But this felt different. It felt more intimate than ever before.

"You know they have this nifty little invention. It's called a telephone? You pick it up and turn this little wheel for numbers and reach out to someone long distance to talk?" Her sarcasm was dripping at him and he gave a soft laugh trying to dance around it with amusement and humor.

A long time ago it would have been done with the intent of a close friendship but his look for her had changed. It was more grown up and with a deep need in his eyes as he watched her sit on her bed while removing his shoes so as not to mess up her carpet in her room. She had forgotten how close they had been as kids before high school and how close they had gotten this past summer despite her ditching on him most of the time.

"Nikki called me. Said you wanted to talk. At first I wasn't going to come over like this but she said I should stop being a jerk and come see you. So... here I am."



He explained putting his shoes down by the couch and then walked over to sit on the trunk at the foot of her bed. She moved over to him and sat beside him there letting a long exasperated sigh out.

"Of course she did. Well, yeah. We do need to talk. About your outburst earlier in the library? What was that all about, anyway? I mean I think I know. But I don't want to say it in case I'm wrong." She bit her lower lip and the way he was looking at her was making her shift on the trunk uncomfortably.

"Mandy, I..." he started rather loudly and she shushed him with her fingers to keep his voice down motioning to the bedroom next door warning him not to wake her parents up.

He nodded and tried again.

"Mandy, I'm sorry for being a jerk. I'm sorry for snapping at you and our friends, okay? I don't know what came over me. I mean... I wanted to see you all summer long. I waited for it and we barely hung out. Then, your first day back at school you're too busy with school work, studying, and avoiding all people including me. All work and no play. You resort to hiding and holing up in the library during lunch when you could have been sitting with me, with all of us. But you don't and instead you stay in the library for your entire lunch break busy with books and too buried in them to notice that I would like to hang with you. Maybe even take you out. On a... date. Or something."

She gave a small laugh and shook her head. He was now staring at the floor and seemed to stiffen up as if he felt rejection coming on. Her laugh had really seemed to hurt him.

"You sound like Nikki. Just... in a different way." He looked like a lost puppy at her and she felt his emotion between the few inches of space where they sat. It was too intense for her liking.

"I like you, Mandy." He blurted it out. Unsure of what to say back to him after saying something like that. But she had a feeling deep down. She had known. She had somehow always known.

She stared at him wide eyed and stunned as she took in his steady

gaze of her face and expressions trying to gauge what she might be thinking. He scooted closer to her and she barely noticed it. He placed his pinky finger over the tip of hers and she felt him lightly touch her just as shy as she was.

This however, while nothing like Billy eyeing her and sizing her up or moving in like a predator, was her childhood best guy friend and felt just as strange. The pieces to this puzzle didn't fit either. Then again, just who could fit in with an oddball like her?

"You could... say something back. Yes? No? Lean in to let me know if I could... kiss you? Or shut me down and tell me to leave? Anything but leaving me hanging like this. It's killing me." He now looked like a kicked puppy.

The hurt look on his face at her refusal to speak and only to stare at him with those big soulful green eyes of hers had to be making a tangled mess inside of him right now but she couldn't find the words. She had to let him down in a way that wouldn't break his heart or make her lose his friendship. Five years was a long time to know someone. Even if it was a boy.

"Tucker... you're an amazing guy. I really like you a lot. Even to the point of loving you." His eyes lit up for a moment and he leaned in closer but she backed away slightly. He balled his hands into nervous fists. She could see the absolute dejection in his eyes and it tore her to pieces.

"But... I love you more like how I love my little brother, Calvin. It's a deep love. But it's family love. Not romantic love."

He shrank back. The blow had been struck. And she had been the one to accidentally and unintentionally deliver it. She watched him waiting to see how he would respond. Silence. The calm before the storm. And then...

"So... you won't even give me a chance? Not even to see if something more could develop over time? I know you so well, Mandy. How do you know we wouldn't be good for each other?"

While he made excellent points, she had to stand firm and hold her

ground. In the back of her mind she felt a small voice telling her there was someone else she was waiting for. Her white knight. Who was it? Because she knew it wasn't Tucker. It certainly wasn't Billy. Billy was a black knight. Dark and twisted and cold. She was almost certain that one day she would find the one she was meant for but it wouldn't be in Hawkins, Indiana.

She grabbed one of her stuffed animals, a bunny, and squeezed it tight drawing her knees up to her chest. He watched her. Carefully. Calculating his chances.

"Tucker, you're very sweet. You have an amazing heart and I cherish it. I don't want to break it. And I don't want to lose our friendship. I just want us to keep being friends. I never want to lose what love we do have between us just as it is."

He gave out an exasperated sigh and stood up to pace slightly in her room. He bit his nails on his thumb and walked back and forth letting all of this hit him like a pound of rocks and all he looked ready to do was sink to the floor. All she could do was watch and wait.

"Okay. Well... I need to go home. I need some time to let this sink in and gestate a little bit. But... I appreciate you're honesty, at least. I'm just sorry I couldn't be more like Billy Hargrove for you."

That last one stung. It stabbed her deep. How did he know about Billy and him chasing after her? Who had he been talking to? He had never seen them eye each other in class, or be backed into her locker by him. So where was this coming from?

"What? Billy?" She had to know and grilled him further. Could Nikki have said something? No, she wouldn't do that. Tina? Tina never gave her the time of day because she was with the in crowd, the popular crowd, and they didn't rotate in the same circles let alone the same universe. Nancy? She knew Nancy enough to trust her not to start rumors like most mean spirited high school girls did.

"What are you talking about, Tucker?"

He looked at her still slightly upset and she thought she saw his eyes mist up just a bit. It was painful for her to see one of her best friends

cry over her. She wasn't worth the tears, really she wasn't. She was NOTHING special.

"Don't act like you don't know."

He spat, grabbing for his shoes and heading over to her window, his back taut and straight with anger. She looked absolutely clueless at him and it partly infuriated and also confused him when he looked back at her to see she was totally in the dark about it.

"Oh shit, you don't know? Mandy... the guy is trash. Okay? He's been talking about you all over school. To the guys. Tommy, Jeff, almost all the guys on the Hawkins Basketball team. In the showers and the locker room. I even caught wind of it during P.E. and basketball practice. Even Steve Harrington knows he is aiming to get to you. He said he has plans to ruin you. Whatever that fuckin' means. Talked a big talk like he had plans to take you out and go all the way. The guy is just out to use you and toss you aside. Don't you understand?"

This hardly came as a surprise, she knew Billy was a jerk and a pervert, but coming from her best friend in such a callous, vicious, and vindictive way... it really hurt her. She began to tear up as well more from the pain of his lashing out than any half baked plan that Billy could come up with to tarnish her.

"My love and sex life is none of your business, Tucker. It's also none of your business if some high school boy high on hormones says dirty things about me. I can handle myself. Besides, I had no intention of going ANYWHERE with Billy. I know to stay away from him. Do you think I would dishonor myself and my family, my parents, and my reputation that way? This is a small town and people talk, but that doesn't mean all of the rumours have to be true. And even if I DID like him..."

She trailed off and that sentence upset him even more. He looked at her like she had committed the ultimate act of betrayal to their long time friendship with that statement. She put her hands up defensively still trying to diffuse his hurt.

"I'm just saying hypothetically. Even if I DID. What gives you the right to tell me who I can and cannot be around? You are not my

boyfriend, you are one of my BEST friends, and you have no say in who I take an interest in." He tried to speak but she ran over him.

"While I do love and care for you, I can never look at you in that same way." She finished off now staring at the floor not wanting him to see her tears over having to be so direct and hurtful back at him.

"Oh, so that's it, huh? That's just how it is bottom line? You can't look at someone like me, someone you have known for YEARS even as kids growing up together, like that? But you can look at Billy that way, who breezes into town barely a day ago and who doesn't even know you like I do, talks disgusting talk about you, and on top of that you don't even know him either? He's a scumbag and I AM trying to protect you!"

"No... you're trying to use our mutual disgust and avoidance of him to make me feel I need you in my life as a boyfriend to protect me from him. So you can have me be what you want me to be. I'm not the one for you, Tucker. You will find her one day. Please stop trying to make me fill those shoes, I cannot."

Her chest was caving in from the intense anguish at having to be so biting and cruel to him. Why did they have to fight like this? This wasn't like them at all. He turned his back on her and crept up to the window to leave.

"Forget it. I'll leave you to your books and your fairytale imagination worlds. Call me when you know how to live a REAL life with REAL people and how to accept REAL love from someone."

With that he huffed and took one last longing look at her instantly regretting his biting insults before leaving out the way he came. Climbing out her window quickly he hurried to scale down the lattice and get back into the yard. He looked up at her and shook his head wiping his eyes before jogging off into the night.

*Asshole. Why, Tucker? Just... why? Why do you want to ruin our friendship? I thought I could trust you.* She thought bitterly as she wept letting her tears fall in full force now that he was no longer present.

When he was gone she cried hard into her stuffed rabbit but muffled

her cries into her pillow instead so her parents wouldn't hear her pain and come knocking to check on her. She wouldn't be able to talk or explain it to them right now.

The tower had been breached. And the hopeful knight who scaled the wall with the attempt to save the princess and break the curse had failed abandoning her and leaving her alone to her fate.

Another one down. Who's next to try to be the brave white knight that could save her? Maybe no ordinary white knight could. Maybe only the darkest of knights would be able to handle all the pain and loneliness inside of her. All the fear and trauma and dark secrets of her past. Because someone like that would feel it too and understand her completely.

She climbed back into bed after shutting and locking her window. She was sobbing uncontrollably and as her tears fell, she thought of Tucker, but it was Billy's face she saw in the armor, looking up at her tower and attempting to climb up to her.

Looking back at her Shakespear leatherbound book sitting on her night stand she grumbled in pain and rolled over hugging her pillow no longer in the mood to read it or enjoy it. Love was pain. Love was bullshit. Love wasn't in the stars for her.

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## **7. Withdrawl - The Lifeguard & His Date**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

### **Chapter 7 - WITHDRAWL - THE LIFEGUARD & HIS DATE**

#### **Summary:**

Mandy has been ignoring Billy all week. The pool party is coming up and he's getting frustrated with her lack of response to him. He feels he cannot even get a single opening to get closer to her. Today is his first day at the Hawkins Community Pool and being a lifeguard.

The pressure of cracking from having Mandy give him the cold shoulder is mounting. So much so he is being mean again to Max and even arguing with his dad getting in trouble.

Mandy is trying to drive home the point to Billy that she does not want him around her and flirting with her. Why can't he just get the hint already?

Later on after school Nikki calls Mandy and invites her to go swimming at the community pool with her. Neither one of them

have any idea that Billy is working there now.

Having a run in with him Mandy panics but stays for her friends trying to have a good time.

He approaches her for a little bit for a talk when changing positions on the tower.

They get into a slight argument, watched by a lot of people at the pool. Eventually things settle down and he calms her. He begs her for a date telling her pick a time and place and he will be there.

Mandy smiles slowly and agrees. She has a very specific thing in mind indeed for their first date...

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For Mandy the next day at school was miserable. Tucker was not at his usual place in the cafeteria inside or outside at the tables. He also didn't show up at the library when Nikki and Alex did. They still had their friendly conversations together during break but it wasn't as lighthearted and happy as usual. Tucker missing made it complicated to really enjoy each other's company. She knew Nikki promised it wouldn't get weird but it definitely got a little more depressing.

They talked about their classes, homework, teachers, and Nikki talked all about her usual favorite subject. Boys, boys, boys. But she didn't mention Billy this time and neither did Mandy much to her relief. She had enough on her plate and was tired of him constantly running through her mind unbidden at the worst of times when she was trying to focus on her classes.

Billy would still eye her whenever they were in the halls together but for some odd reason he held back and wouldn't approach her. He was all stares but seemed to have ceased getting close. Perhaps he sensed the change in her as she picked up more confidence to not be baited by his usual tactics.

When he said flirty things to her in first period she would act as if she heard nothing but the wind. No matter how much he begged for her



to turn around and talk to him she refused coldly.

Mandy had hoped he was finally getting the message that she did not want him around her but in first period he would still sometimes try to whisper to her behind her desk and get her attention. She would sit there still as a statue and ignore him which she could hear was making him slightly upset by the way he sighed at her and even seemed to grumble slightly.

His open flirtation with Tina around her picked up pretty heavy sometimes but she wouldn't look or give him the time of day even then so eventually he even began to avoid Tina putting space between them. She guessed maybe he thought to himself if he didn't do that she might come around and like him more but that was not the case. It was just simply a relief not to have to witness it anymore.

Each day throughout the rest of the week she tried her hardest to look as nerdy and out of sorts as she could without causing personal embarrassment to herself. It was a game she was playing. How undesirable could she make herself look to him to switch him off from obsessing on her?

She wore her glasses more and took out her contacts. She wore even baggier and drab boring clothes always hiding her figure from him and dressed rather mismatched and lazily. At her own risk of personal injury she left her shoelaces untied and she even went as far as to put her long beautiful main of dark raven hair up into long pigtails that trailed down her backside. If Mandy had braces she would wear the ugliest headpiece she owned just for him to get her message across.

Yet, no matter how strange she dressed or how she denied him a view of her lovely curves or her long flowing hair, still each day he tried to get her attention while sitting behind her.

Eventually he seemed to back down a bit and would often throw a few glares her way which would make her proud of herself grinning at him in victory then continue walking past him. The more she ignored him the angrier and more frustrated he seemed to get but she also noticed the more he seemed to back off.

He still wouldn't take his eyes off of her though. That she couldn't control. She loved knowing she was getting to him by doing the exact opposite around him than what he expected her to do from her clothing and style choices to her cold indifferent mannerisms and reactions to him, often giving him no reaction whatsoever when he tried to get a rise out of her.

Nikki couldn't help but laugh a few times in class when she saw just how desperate the scene truly was between them. Mandy guessed she still believed there was something there between her and Billy and was absolutely amused at how, in her mind, they were apparently playing hard to get with one another and delaying something inevitable.

Each time Mandy shot Nikki a look she stopped laughing, got a serious look, and mouthed an apology just letting it go. It infuriated her that even with all this effort, he would still sometimes walk slowly behind her as she made her way down the hall between classes and when she would turn to catch him in the act he would turn and look away or go down a different corridor as if he wasn't. It was like having her very own personal stalker and she wasn't too thrilled about it.

Still, her escape from him remained the library as her friends would never out that location to Billy. It was the one place she could feel safe from his blue bedroom eyes and his whispers to try and get her to turn around and pay attention to him.

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Billy was torn in between wanting to approach and not wanting her to unleash an angry tirade at him making her best defense a vicious offense. He had originally thought her the mousey shy type too sweet to be mean. But the cruel side of her was showing and he was unsure what to make of it. It angered him but deep down it made him want her even more.

Opting to back off and be cool about it he had hoped she would come around and maybe approach him for once. But his hopes were dashed to pieces on that when he saw that it had no effect on her and she still maintained her distance from him.

His need to get a reaction out of her was mounting to dangerous levels and he was even tempted to pull her aside in a dark empty classroom to confront her dismissal of him but he didn't want to risk her complaining to faculty about him or risk being too needy. He was not a desperate type of guy when it came to being ignored by a female but her rejection of him was causing a slow burn in his pride and in his opinion of himself.

For days he went without seeing her besides in the hallways and in first period English. She never showed up again at the gym to watch him practice like she did the first day and reality was beginning to set in for him fast.

Mandy Hawkins wanted nothing to do with him. Mandy didn't want him. It was hitting him hard but he did everything in his power not to admit it. Instead he was grouchier than ever with Max during their miserable shared car rides together to the school lot and he was even being angry enough to boldly backtalk his old man.

He got backhanded once because of his liping off and attitude but he took the pain and swallowed it down along with his bitterness towards Mandy for making him feel this way. For putting him through this unfair torment.

He wanted to tease her. To make her blush. To see that fiery look in her eyes again that she once showed him. It would seem he was stuck getting no further with her in his progression to seduce her. What was he doing wrong?

A few times he had almost been hurt and frustrated enough that he wanted to punch the hard gym shower wall with his bare fist as he rinsed off after P.E. class. He had wanted to put a cracked hole in it to match the cracked hole in his pride.

Why was she doing this to him? Was she enjoying putting him through this? How could she be so cruel as to deny him even the simple sound of her voice talking to him each time he tried to get her attention in class?

He could only wonder as he felt he did nothing wrong to deserve it. He had not done anything different with her than he had ever done

to any other girl to try and win their affections and get them to want him in return. But more importantly, why was it bothering him so much? Why did it get to him?

Sometimes he would lay in bed at night thinking about her and get so worked up that he would have to take care of himself due to his intense need for her.

It began to grow slowly over time so much so that even his date nights with other girls were bland and boring leaving him unsatisfied. He couldn't even enjoy another girl's company much to his disappointment without wishing they were Mandy as his hands and lips traveled their soft bodies in the dark of his car.

It was pathetic. He was being pathetic. Finally deciding to try and let it go he began to give Mandy what she seemingly wanted. No interaction with him whatsoever, practically out of spite and anger at her turning him down.

This issue with Mandy was really starting to eat at him and he was wracking his brain trying to come up with ways to get her to play with him like she used to. Try to get her to play his game and excite him with her angsty biting comments or her defiant looks she would give him. He began to realize that the space she used to occupy in his life was feeling slightly like a hole caving in on itself leaving nothing there but an emptiness.

Max had noticed how Billy was angrier and more explosive than usual and felt like she was walking on eggshells or landmines around him instead of being her usual on edge yet sassy self when stuck in the car with him. He would bounce between intense fits of verbal rage and then become eerily silent not wanting to say anything at all, his moods becoming more erratic. Harder to guess or brace herself for and more random day by day. It got to the point where she would be utterly silent around him not even daring to give a mean flippant comment.

After basketball practice Friday Billy hurried to shower sparing no time or effort to taunt Steve giving his usual cocky advice and pointers. Hell, he didn't even talk to Tommy much. They both saw this as unusual for him but neither one commented on it and just let

it be considering whatever was going on with him must be rough to change him like that. They would give him glances here and there wondering why his demeanor had seemingly changed somewhat from the usual pompous and antagonistic Billy they were used to him being.

Tommy noticed it most of all and began to talk to Carol about it. Carol in turn would talk to Tina which would result in her trying extra hard to cheer him up by increasing her flirting with him. She even almost let him makeout and get touchy with her one night at the Quarry, something she had not ever let him get close to, while in his Camaro where they parked.

Although he tried to be into it, he just couldn't. It was as if his libido was put on pause which was not normal for him at all. His inner fire doused. Stamped out. He was off and she was picking up on it too and sighing not knowing what to do. So finally she just asked him to take her home and said goodnight to him.

Rinsing himself off head to toe wordlessly without his usual demoralization of Steve and saying a short curt goodbye to Tommy he left the showers to dress and leave. He had to get home and put on his work clothes as his shift would start soon at three thirty.

Neil had warned him not to be late to the job he helped him get and warned him that if he screwed it up there would be dire consequences.

Billy grimaced quickly picturing that blowout fight in his head as he drove home. He was relieved he didn't have to wait around for Max this time since he was working a shift as per him and Neil's agreement.

As tough as he was with anyone else who dared step on his toes or even look at him the wrong way, he feared his father and it made him crawl inside himself with shame, hatred, and repulsion at how weak he was to only one person on the entire face of this pathetic planet.

As a small boy he had cowered in fear of Neil many a night never having the strength to defend himself or strike back. Not even to run

or hide. Even now as a much older man that cowering little boy was still buried and embedded deep down within him shuddering each time his father would come at him with violent hate and rage in his eyes for his own son. There was always something he was fucking up that made him want to hit him and verbally degrade him.

When the last of his protection left him all alone with the monster, a stinging betrayal he had never forgotten, he had given up on ever being free of the pain he suffered at the hands of Neil and instead he deflected and channeled it onto others to numb it out of himself. Over his years of growing up from a boy to a teen he had taken his aggression out on kids his own age but often smaller and weaker than him until it wasn't enough.

No longer a challenge to pick on the weaker ones he felt confident enough to take on the older stronger kids. Because of this he was top dog at his old high school in California and made plenty of wild troubled teens as friends there.

Billy was never one to back down from a fight or lose so it often sickened him to his core about how he could never beat his own father bloody when faced with his wrath and would shrivel down to nothing when facing off with him. He was the one monster in his closet and under his bed he had never truly been able to grow out of or confront.

Billy slammed his locker open and shut while getting his clothes ready. Toweling off his strong fit body, that he daily marvelled was often the victim of his father's abuse no matter how much he pumped iron and strengthened himself, he pushed these thoughts out of his head and snapped himself back into what was most important. Getting to work on time. Finishing changing into his regular clothes for the drive home he slammed his locker door again for good measure and stomped off towards the school lot.

Thankfully he didn't have to pick up and deliver Maxine today from the Hawkins middle school but he still had things he had to do before his shift. He would only have this job for another week or two, even though just acquiring it, since summer was ending. He guessed Neil's short sightedness on that one would still be blamed on him regardless forcing him to seek out new work to replace it.

When Hawkins Community Pool would be shutting down for the coming Fall and Winter seasons, seeing as he was late arriving to Hawkins for the full scope of Summer, he would have to search extra hard for a replacement job to keep his old man from nailing his ass to the wall and that was a literal one not a metaphorical one.

Billy figured as long as he kept working and earning money helping with the finances of the household then Neil would leave him virtually alone to do whatever he wanted on the weekends. The bonus perk, if he were lucky, would be that he would also hit and verbally attack him less. As long as he was busting his ass working himself to the bone while keeping afloat with his grades in school, his father would be pleased with him enough that he would potentially stay off his back. Being at work would also enable him to spend less time at home having to deal with all three of them especially Maxine and her preteen mouthy bullshit.

He often thought of getting a position in the Starcourt Mall laughing at the fact that he would be within the same general vicinity as Harrington. He had heard that the pretty boy was working as an ice cream sales associate at Scoops Ahoy and had to wear the dorkiest of costumes. A male sailor suit and a stupid sailor hat to match. Fitting for a Queen like him despite everyone still calling Steve the "King" of Hawkins High. He would love to get a load of that costume and humiliate him every damn day on lunch and partial breaks just to fuck with him.

The look on Harrington's face would be undeniably golden to see if he came over to get ice cream making Steve bow and scrape to serve Billy impossible flavor combinations and then change his mind making him take them back to make new ones making his job even harder. It could be fun. He just hoped Steve wouldn't actually be dumb enough to spit on his ice cream so he would have to watch him like a hawk while serving it.

With that being part of his inspiration to apply there, he already put in applications in as many of the mall's shopping booths as he could in advance. He took care to avoid the fast food places in the food court however. He was anticipating his short lifeguard duty which would not continue until next Summer rolled around but so far none of them had called him back with a position. Even after positive

interviews that went very well where he also was able to work his charm and sexual charisma on the female interviewers. They had drooled all over him absolutely loving him but he guessed maybe he was too attractive to work for them.

The males in charge of the interviews he guessed didn't want him there being afraid he would upstage them at customer service with his good looks. The females most likely feared he would cause too much of a stir on the job distracting other female employees. Maybe they felt he would be a liability or cause a drop in sales and production if the females couldn't focus on their work and focused only him. Sometimes he felt cursed to be this good looking and never once stopped to question how vain he was about it.

Even with Max no longer being a burden during the weekdays before work he would still have to stop by his father's house and dry his hair to fix it up and make himself look good. There was no way he would be in the presence of all the ladies at the pool, young or old married or single, with his hair a wet disheveled mess. He had to style it even if it would all get undone the moment he might have to jump into the pool ruining his hard work just to help save a stupid person from dying on his watch.

He chuckled to himself grinning while driving to the house when he thought of all the desperate horny ladies that would be at the pool and how they would react to him seeing someone like him for the first time. Billy just knew he would thoroughly enjoy strutting his stuff about the pool shirtless and in his red lifeguard trunks enjoying all the attention they would be garnering him with.

Most of the women there would most likely willingly drown themselves any day of the week if it meant getting mouth to mouth from him. If the female he had to do CPR on was really hot he supposed he could enjoy it. Saving a life and getting some action killing two birds with one stone.

He just hoped against all hope it would be anything but having to save a less desirable or another male. He would do it to keep his job but he would hate every minute of it. He hated kids and absolutely loathed morons who couldn't breathe and chew gum at the same time. If a person was a combination of the two, a drowning kid being



one of those morons, he would still have to do his job and rescue them.

Before he was to show up for work they put him through basic lifeguard training and taught him the basics of CPR on training dummies. He passed and got certified for the position. He cringed at the thought of having to put his lips all over some stranger just to keep them breathing when the only thing he wanted to use his mouth for was to kiss and pleasure a fine woman.

In his unpopular self centered opinion, if you were too stupid to be safe or actually try to keep yourself alive, then you may as well be at the bottom of a pool with no hope for oxygen turning blue. The weak and stupid died out and were filtered out from the intelligent and strong. Adaptation. That was just nature's way. Natural selection, baby.

After styling his hair and putting on his Hawkins Community Pool lifeguard tank top shirt with a white button up shirt over it he sprayed some of his signature cologne on himself. Grinning into the mirror he admired his preened self and then grabbed his poolside necessities along with his favorite pair of sunglasses for the day under the warm sun.

Who knew how much the heat and bright rays with clear skies would last as they were getting further and further apart replaced with cloudy grey ones and misty foggy mornings. The chill wind was coming more and more as the days passed but he would enjoy it for everything it was worth until then.

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Pulling up to a reserved employee parking spot he grinned when several females took notice of his loud purring Camaro and the handsome stranger sitting in it. He raised his sunglasses on his head over his golden curls and winked at them while getting out and locking up.

They smiled at him some of them through their own sunglasses checked him out in return trying hard to show off for him their lean and amazing bodies in their swimsuits and bikinis. Lowering his

sunglasses back down he only looked them up and down once his shades were on so as to not be too obvious about it. Not on his first day. He had to make a solid impression that he was unobtainable to any of them and leave them wanting more.

Seeing their desire for him he was almost feeling back to his old self again and forgetting the offputting behavior of Mandy or the annoyingly clingy personality of Tina. He felt refreshed with new prospects to chase down and it somewhat restored his vigor and appetite to flirt.

Walking up to the gate and opening it he walked over to the first lifeguard he saw to ask where he would be placing his stuff and where he would get his lifesaving accessories.

"Hello. I'm Billy. I'm the new hire for the position. And you are?" He held out his hand to a tall slender female with medium lengthed dark brown hair in a half done up bun.

As soon as she noticed him talking to her she stopped paying attention to the male lifeguard she had been laughing and flirting with. Her jaw almost dropped and she started smacking her gum as she checked him out from head to toe.

"Nice to meet you, Billy. I'm Heather. Heather Holloway." The girl had said her name with an attempt at adding a sexual lilt to her voice and he grinned taking her hand in his and shaking it slowly. He saw her face and how she instantly got excited over the contact when they touched.

"Likewise. Charmed." He smiled at her resisting to do his usual move of kissing her hand to further cement his flirtation with her.

"So... where do I start?" Heather gave him a look that almost allowed him to read her thoughts about where she would just LOVE for him to start. On her.

"Well, first let me tell you about the facilities. The showers are separated by genders left to right. Left is the men's and right is the women's. In the back there are lockers you can use to store your clothes and other small items. The supply closet has pool chemicals

but you won't need to worry about that as we have a pool guy who takes care of that for us at least two times a day. Once before the pool opens and then a final time after it closes."

He nodded listening intently while putting on lean finger on his chin and keeping his steady gaze locked onto her while she explained things to him. She stammered a few times seeing his blue eyes focused so steadily on her. She was obviously getting slightly intimidated.

"The lifeguard chairs are at each end of the pool on opposite sides and the general rule is there must be at least one sitting there at all times. We take shifts and switch off turns alternating every ten minutes to help with posture being seated so long in one position like that. Rescue tubes, rings, floaties, and life vests are over there on the rack near the emergency phone which is easy to spot hanging on the wall."

He trailed his intense blue eyes over to the rack and then back to Heather's rack. Getting an eyeful of it she didn't miss a beat of him scoping her cleavage out and tried to continue.

"There's uhhh... there's also plenty of bottled water to keep you cool while sitting there in case you get... hot. Lifeguards are not allowed in the pool unless under dire emergency circumstances to break up horseplay and fights between swimmers. The males usually handle this though. Also you only go into the water to save those who may be at risk of drowning or are presently drowning. Make sure to keep a close eye on everything as much as possible because it only takes just a few seconds to look away and miss something."

God she talked a lot. Did she ever pause for breath? He could easily think of a way to silence her in his fevered imagination of cornering her in the women's shower room. However, this was his place of employment, so he would have to keep his hands to himself and be on his best behavior. That wouldn't stop him from having naughty thoughts or using his words however.

"I assume... you are trained in CPR and how to recognize when someone is drowning?" She asked looking immediately to his wide gorgeous mouth being so very obvious he could hardly contain his

amusement. For good measure he licked his lips slowly and bit his lower one at her.

"Oh yes, they trained me well. Not that I needed it, though. I assure you I am very good at giving mouth to mouth." Heather blushed and turned away at his sultry description of the most basic lifesaving technique.

"Uhh... good. So ummm, then you won't be needing any training dummy practice." She said trying to hide her lust over him but poorly. Most likely imagining herself being who he would practice on and not the training dummy.

"Thank you so much for that run down, Heather. I'm sure thankful that I have someone here as knowledgeable as you to help me with my orientation."

He buttered her up putting on a charming smile for her and saw her blush and look down for a moment. The male lifeguard next to her was folding his arms over his chest clearly detecting his bullshit and picking up on his game. He eventually walked away feeling completely jealous and inadequate to fight for her attention knowing he was unable to take it away from Billy.

Some of what he said was honest. He had to hand it to her, she knew her stuff. This was all very vital information any new lifeguard would need.

"Who's he?" Billy nodded smirking arrogantly towards the lifeguard that took off in an angry defeated attitude.

"Oh, that's umm... that's another one of our lifeguards here. His name is Freddy."

"He your boyfriend?" Billy looked into her eyes and teased her doing everything he could to make her rethink it if he was. She laughed lightly touching her throat. Too easy. Her laugh told him everything he needed to know.

"God, no. Just... just a friend."

He grinned as she laughed clearly hiding she did have a budding

thing for Freddy until Billy came along.

"I see." He grinned at her and she couldn't stop grinning back while playing with her own whistle nervously.

Yeah, he bet NOW he was 'just a friend', alright. Once she had gotten a load of him there was virtually nothing going to happen between Heather and Freddy anytime soon and he swelled in his ego over that fact.

"So what is the shift like? I understand it's short but the pay is good per hour since what we do is very... hard." Billy smiled at her with that last word knowing she had been checking out his body from his abs and even lower to what he was packing underneath his swim trunks. He had a sparkle in his eye while showing his pearly whites to her.

"Ummm... the shift is easy. It's two shifts split in the middle at three hours and thirty minutes each. We are only open from noon until closing which is sunset at seven. My boss has informed us all that you have school so I know that makes it hard for you to be here for the opening hour. I'm glad he fit you in to work here regardless and giving you the evening shift. Normally he doesn't hire students because he finds them to be rather undependable due to their need of school work and studying."

Yeah, he bet she was glad. She had never seen a guy as fit and sexy as himself, not even in college he bet as a college student which is what he picked up from her, and she was definitely getting a good look at him while explaining things. Hell, she didn't even care he was underage and in high school as her eyes were still all over him.

"So you will be working the evening shift from three thirty to closing with Freddy and I."

She almost pouted at this. Freddy now had competition and she obviously didn't want him getting in the way of her being able to have fun flirting with Billy during their shift together.

"In addition to us on the job we also have Zoe, Katie, and Adam. They will be on the day shift from noon to three thirty leaving as we

arrive. We always have three lifeguards on duty at any given time from opening to close as a safety precaution and we mix up male and female lifeguards on each team. Due to legal reasons I suppose."

He nodded giving her full attention as she talked even though it was getting to the point that he just really wanted to leave and go party with his friends. Having a job for money was an absolutely essential thing but he absolutely loathed the tying down of his freedoms. Still he had to keep his baby full on gas somehow and be able to afford his smokes and his party boy habit now that his father would be cutting him off and making him rely on his own wages.

"So yeah, basically everything is all divided by six people from noon to seven, considering this is only a part time job. The shift change brings in the other three lifeguards to let the former ones go home for the day. The pool gets locked up at night after it gets checked on and cleaned and the chemicals cycled and refreshed. They test the chlorine levels and the PH of the water very accurately for safety and health reasons."

Billy noticed she seemed pleased as punch to be on his shift. The mention of two other female lifeguards caught his interest but he didn't reveal that to her. Even with Heather fawning all over him and seeing she was very attractive, his male part of his brain hooked up to his sex drive was curious as to what Katie and Zoe looked like compared to her.

"Sounds like a plan. Well, I better get up there and get started, huh? Thank you for catching me up to speed and letting me know about the showers. It was a real pleasure. I'll see you around, Heather."

He smirked when he saw that the image of him wet in the showers was seeded in her brain making her bite her lower lip as she imagined it. The way he said her name most likely also turned her gears loving the sound of it rolling off of his lips with his deep voice.

It was the same thing he had done to Mandy at gym practice. He knew it was the best way to make a female imagine things about him and he loved doing it to them seeing their faces as they envisioned it in their mind.

All the women surrounding them were gawking, whether in the water, on the pool loungers, or walking by, and Heather definitely noticed just how attractive he was to other women and not just herself. She looked side to side while chewing her gum as if slightly envious of their eyes being all over him. She could already tell he was going to be the new favorite around here even more so than Freddy had been when he first showed up.

"No problem. You're up now so here's your lanyard whistle and your lifeguard safety kit."

She handed him the required items and he kind of frowned at having to wear the kit. It was a red water proof pouch with a white cross on it and the community pool's logo.

"It's a simple pouch you wear around your waist like a fannypack and has almost everything you will need in there. Also, the bottled waters are in the ice chests resting at the base of the towers. Take a bottled water from the ice chest from time to time and drink, trust me you will need one while up there. Oh and... let me know if there is anything you need, Billy. Anytime. Anything at all."

She handed him the plastic red whistle on a red cord to put around his neck and he did so as soon as he received it while smiling at her. Her last statement was saturated with lust and flirtation and he grinned looking her up and down.

"Absolutely. I sure will." He said in his signature husky voice causing her to catch her breath slightly before walking away to do her lap walking around the pool keeping an eye on things until he was ready to climb his high tower and onto to his new throne.

He would love the power and authority of working here making sure to keep people in line while blowing his whistle at any punk who got out of line. He would enjoy sitting high up looking down on all the other people below him as the women checked him out with their lustful stares.

He noticed a group of older women all sitting side by side under their shaded umbrellas lounging in the pool chairs. As soon as his eyes went in that direction they almost all looked away in unison and he

noticed them turning to each other to squawk and gabble on together most likely about him.

They stole looks his way when they thought he wasn't looking and they swooned each time he had to blow his whistle at a runner or a person rough housing in the pool to shout at them to knock it off or he would ban them for life. His display of dominance and aggression clearly getting them hot under the collar for him. Older women loved a man that took charge, that was a simple understanding he had come by when often flirting with older women.

His threat had been an empty threat, he knew he couldn't do that, but it was effective and they stopped and were listening to him immediately. He grinned lazily and sipped his bottled water thoroughly enjoying this and for once he was thankful to Neil for setting him up with something.

Looking into the crowds of people for the next few hours, both in the water and out of it, he caught himself occasionally looking for and wondering if Mandy ever came here. She was still on his mind even as all the women were gawking at him all wanting a piece of him.

He could imagine how fun it would be to flirt with any one of these desperate females in front of her and see what her reaction would be.

Not too far off from where he sat with his serious eyes scoping the entire pool, the group of older women lounging about in their pool chairs were staring and talking about him.

"Oh my god, where did HE come from? Have you ever seen him before?" Katrina Taylor, a rather youthful attractive mom of two, with long curly blond hair up in a half do bun and sporting a tiger print swimsuit and leopard print sunvisor, asked to her friends as she lowered her shades to get an eyeful. She had been looking in her compact mirror making sure she was looking good for the hot new lifeguard as she spoke.

"No, honey. He's definitely new. I would have remembered a good lookin' piece like that any day. Look how strong his arms are. And those legs, wow! I wouldn't mind wrapping myself around that." Evian Nichols, a dark haired pale skinned thinner and older woman



replied while staring along with her friend admiring the view and fanning herself, her dark lipstick a deep contrast to her fair complexion as she smiled flirtatiously and waving to him. He didn't notice one bit and kept his eyes around the pool area causing her to frown in frustration.

"Please, Evian, don't be so crass. He looks like he's just a kid. Most likely a teenager from Hawkins Highschool or something. Way too young for a MARRIED woman such as yourself."

Mrs Wheeler, Nancy, Mike, and Holly Wheeler's mother, said in a catty tone reminding her friend of her slight adultery by the way she was eyeballing him up and down. Karen was making a show of not even looking as she laid back enjoying herself at the poolside respectively.

"Oh, as if you weren't looking yourself. Honestly, Karen, you're no better off than any one of us. How's Ted? Still falling asleep in his chair every night instead of in your shared marriage bed?" Vicki Sanderson shot back with a stronger bite than she usually did.

Karen frowned. She knew how the women who were considered her 'friends' had noticed how unhappy her home life with her husband was since they were often over for dinners and for their club they would get together over on the weekends when the kids were spending time with their own friends.

"Sorry." Vicki replied feeling bad when she noticed the hurt look Karen shot her way over that heartless remark.

"Yes, I know. Ted and I have our... problems but I am still every inch of a faithful wife to him despite our struggles. You know I love my husband and my family."

"Oh, don't listen to her, darlin'. Married life isn't easy or always full of bliss. Every one of us sitting here right now knows that pain." Evian said trying to soothe the hurt between her two friends.

They all nodded in agreement, except for Mrs Wheeler who actually fell into the temptation to look. She couldn't deny he was very handsome. Not her type, even if she were to have an affair. It was

immoral and wrong. Deep down she knew that. Although his appearance exuded confidence she could very much tell he was under the age of eighteen easily enough.

"Oh! He's looking this way! Hurry up ladies, positions!" Vicki exclaimed as she propped her full figured self up on her chair and tried to look every inch as slim and lovely as her companions.

All of them straightened up trying to look their best when his eyes seemed to move over in their direction. Karen didn't bother and kept herself natural. She was above these petty games and had no intention of trying to get the attention of some youngster no matter how much of a teen dream heart throb he may appear to be.

Billy definitely noticed the group of women and it took everything he had not to laugh at how desperate they looked as they tried to look good for him. He did however notice one of them in the bunch and lowered his sunglasses partly below his eyes checking the older woman out.

She was wearing an interesting suit that was two tone in color, half pink and half blue. He chewed his gum and got a quick look in before he returned to watching a fat kid run around the edge of the pool which made him blow his whistle loudly and scold him for it.

"Did you see that, Karen? He was totally checking you out!" Evian said excitedly and the other women got a small scowl on their faces for having not been chosen for that experience. Karen smiled shyly but let it go.

*I am a faithful mom of three. I am a faithful mom of three. I love my husband. I love my husband...*

She said inside her head resisting all temptation and trying to go back to sunbathing ignoring her friends fawning all over the young fresh piece of meat they were slathering and salivating about.

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"So, can you come? You LOVE swimming, Mandy. How could you turn it down?" Nikki said over the phone whining pathetically hoping

her friend would agree and change her mind.

"I know I do. I just... I don't know. I don't like going to the pool during the early hours of it's operation. Too many people there. I usually prefer the evening time before closing. That way I don't feel so self conscious."

Mandy sighed feeling stupid for even caring about such things. She wished she had a higher opinion of herself and her figure and wasn't so worried about showing it all the time. Her bathing suit was rather old and didn't even fit her right. It would do but it was a bit snug in the back and the front portions making her feel too exposed of her curves and apex down there.

"Well, you need to let me know if you are coming because my dad says I can only go once I finish my homework first. Ugghh. It's about three thirty right now so I could pick you up at four. You know they close down around just past sunset at seven when it starts getting too dark and dangerous for swimmers. So we would be lucky to get three hours in while there."

Mandy twisted the phone cord in her fingers and sighed. She knew this meant a lot to Nikki and she had made a promise to hang out with her friends more than she did last year.

"Okay. I'll get my suit on and my towel and sunblock ready with a change of clothes. Pick me up as soon as you can when your done."

Nikki screamed into the phone and Mandy had to pull it away from her ear so her eardrums wouldn't risk getting shattered by her friend's excitement. She laughed and Nikki told her she would be right over as soon as she finished her homework before hanging up.

An hour or so later and both Mandy and Nikki were cruising down the road heading to the community pool listening to music and talking animately. Mandy felt a whole lot better to no longer have to deal with Billy's unwanted affections and with less run ins she was glad she finally solved at least ONE of her problems.

Now if she could only get Tommy to stop harassing her every chance he got and find a way to patch things up with Tucker she could

literally die the happiest person on Earth.

"Mandy, please tell me you will throw that old thing out after this and accept the bikini I picked out for you. You badly need to update your gear. I still want to go shopping with you at Starcourt as soon as possible."

Her friend looked at her down her sunglasses as they drove to their destination and she smirked at her.

"If I do, will you stop talking about it?" She joked making Nikki stick her tongue out at her.

They both giggled as they pulled up at the pool. Mandy's heart sunk when she noticed the unmistakable blue Camaro parked not more than a few spaces over.

"Nikki... no. How could you? Did you?" She started but Nikki looked just as shocked as she was to see it. Mandy believed her because she looked honestly surprised.

"No. I swear. I had no idea about this. Do you want to go home? I'll understand if you do." Nikki frowned with the car still running and the stereo still playing music.

Before she could answer, Nancy startled them when she approached Nikki's side of the car and greeted them happily. They both jumped.

"Wow... what's up with you two? You look like you've seen a ghost. Is something wrong?"

Nikki pointed to the blue Camaro with her hand covering her mouth so Mandy wouldn't see and mouthed Billy's name then nodded in Mandy's direction.

"Nikki I can see you." Mandy sighed and Nikki made an 'oh shit' face. Nancy looked confused.

"Billy Hargrove? Yeah he's here. I saw him not too long ago. Why? Is everything okay?"

Nikki sighed allowing Mandy to explain it if she wanted to. Mandy

paused and looked down at the floor of the car in front of her. She stared straight ahead and spilled it much against her will to make it public.

"I'm just not very fond of him. I don't like being around him or having him near me. But I guess I have no choice because I can't back down now." Nikki looked sad feeling as if she had ruined their swim time unintentionally.

"I'm sorry, Mandy. I didn't know." Nikki said feeling very guilty.

"Well, if it makes you feel better, you can just hang out with Steve and I. I bet Hargrove won't come near you then he doesn't like Steve at all and hasn't been hounding him as he usually does instead avoiding him."

Nancy said with a reassuring smile. Mandy brightened up a little bit at the idea and nodded giving a gentle smile.

"Alright! We got ourselves and anti-Billy plan! Let's do this!" Nikki said super excited that their day wouldn't be ruined after all.

Getting out of the car Nikki locked it up and they all walked in together. Mandy's eyes darted nervously around hoping not to land on Billy. When she saw the area looked clear of him she breathed a sigh of relief and continued to walk with her friends as Nancy lead the way to where Steve was reclining lazily in the pool lounge. He had sunblock smeared all over him, most likely put on by Nancy and he looked like a fat lazy contented house cat.

As soon as he opened his eyes and noticed them approaching he got a wide smile on his face and greeted them, pulling Nancy onto the lounge with him making room for her.

"Heeeeey. Hello, ladies! To what do I owe the dubious pleasure of a visit from you on this fine summer day?" Nikki grinned and took the lounge next to them all smiles asking to borrow some of their sunblock as she forgot her own.

"Oh, nothing much. Still owning the pool, Harrington?" Mandy teased. He laughed feeling like a millionair with his own private pool

acting as if he truly did own it.

"You know it! Hi, Mandy. How have you been? You excited for my party?" When she looked at him he gave her a sympathetic knowing smile and was trying to be kind to her. Mandy guessed what Tucker said about Billy spreading rumors was true and even Steve knew about it.

"I've been good. Yeah, I'm great. Totally excited." She lied through her teeth but he didn't let on if he had noticed she wasn't being honest with him or not. He simply smiled at her and was being very friendly.

"It's gonna be wild. I can't wait. You guys are going to love it. I have everything planned out. So you just relax and let Steve here roll out the red carpet for you when you arrive this weekend. I know you guys will have a lot of fun."

He grinned and leaned in to kiss Nancy on her cheek and she snuggled into him happily. Mandy adored their sweetness with one another and smiled nodding.

"Hey, Mandy, do you want anything from the concession stand? I don't know about you but I am STARVING." Nikki smirked and rubbed her stomach as a visual to her hunger pains.

"You know me, I'm all about the chicken strips and fries they have here." She replied and reached into her bag to get her cash ready. Nikki pushed her hand back into her bag gently.

"No, no. On me. My treat, darlin'. Come on, let's go get our snackage on. I'm so glad I don't cramp up when I eat before swimming."

She said laughing and Mandy stood up asking if Nancy or Steve wanted anything but they were so lost in each other she let them be shaking her head grinning. They were just such a cute couple together.

"Wait up, Nikki!" Mandy exclaimed as she did her best to catch up to her friend who was headed full force in the direction of the snack bar. As they were walking she noticed Nancy's mom was here too and

was relaxing with her own friends. They both waved at her and she waved back smiling at them.

"Okay so... what to drink though? They have Sprite, Coke, Pepsi, and Root Beer. Hmmm... decisions decisions."

Nikki put her hand on her chin thoughtfully earning a giggle from Mandy. So far so good. It looked like everything was going to be just fine with no sight of Hargrove anywhere. It made her curious as to why his car was here if he wasn't even present but she thanked her lucky stars he wasn't anyway.

"Root Beer. It's so good. They have the Mug kind. I love that stuff." Nikki nodded at her decision and began to order.

Mandy was looking around at all the happy faces of people swimming, playing in the water, talking, and even a couple tossing a beach ball around back and forth. The sun was strong today shining on her skin making her body feel warm and relaxed. She could feel it even through her long white T-shirt that she had put over her suit but unfortunately it wasn't long enough to cover her legs from her knees down, which she heavily regretted.

As she looked around she noticed the lifeguards sitting and doing their thing watching over people and occasionally blowing their whistle if someone got out of line.

As they were headed back to the chairs where Steve and Nancy were laughing and kissing Mandy noticed one of the lifeguards. A female with brownish dark hair climb down off the tower.

"Looks like the changing of the guard." Nikki said playfully handing the cardboard basket of Mandy's food to her. She took it happily and sat down with her friends.

No more than a few minutes later, all of Mandy's happiness and piece of mind shattered. She watched as in slow motion as one of the back shower room doors opened up and frowning in a fit of anxiety, Billy Hargrove walked out looking almost as he did that day in the gym during his practice.

Only this time instead of the Hawkins green gym shorts, he had a pair of red lifeguard swimtrunks on with the Hawkins pool logo on it. He had a white and red tank top on with the same matching logo, the inside white and the borders red. It barely contained his muscles which could be easily seen both underneath as well as where his arms were exposing his strong biceps. His shades sat low over the bridge of his nose with his eyes barely peeking out over the tops of them.

Mandy's throat went dry and when Nikki and Nancy noticed where she was staring they both stared at her with a worried look on her face.

"Mandy? Mandy, it's okay. You're with us. Nothing will happen. I promise." Nikki tried to console her shaking her out of her deadlock stare of sheer panic that was glued to Billy as he walked out with his usual confident gait.

He was surveiling the entire pool area and changing places with the female lifeguard that got down from the tower chair. He picked himself up a bottled water from an ice chest and smiled stopping to talk to her before climbing his way up to the top to sit. His powerful legs easily scaling the tower steps with no trouble at all.

Turning around he got comfortable in his seat, a King on his throne, and for good measure at all the ladies that were looking his way he slowly removed his white top and showed off his entire torso from the hips up fully knowing how he looked sitting up there.

Nancy looked mortified when she noticed even her own mother along with her friends looking up at him.

"Ew." Was all she said but she let it go not even wanting to know or hold onto it.

"Dayyyummmmn." Nikki said as she was also staring at how good he looked sitting atop the lifeguard chair and slowly began munching absentmindedly on a french fry.

Mandy tried to look away. Especially after his gaze seemed to almost land on her where she sat. He grinned and for a moment she thought



he had spotted her but when he looked away it was clear he didn't. Perhaps he didn't recognize her just yet in her swimsuit and white shirt.

"Still going in the water?" Nikki turned finishing off a few of her fries trying to change the subject.

"Ummm... I don't know." Mandy hesitated and saw Steve hadn't even noticed because he was sunbathing and lounging again with his eyes closed behind his shades.

"Oh, come on, Mandy, forget him! Don't let him ruin your day at the pool. Besides, he has to be stuck up there on that chair for at least another fifteen minutes or so before his next change out. So you have plenty of time to have fun in the water and get out before he does to sit with us. Just ignore him, sweetie."

Nikki made a good point. He couldn't approach her from where he sat so it was relatively safe. She doubted he could even get in the water while on duty. If she had known he worked here she would have NEVER agreed to come here.

"Why the hell is he here?..." Mandy heard herself stupidly say. Nikki and Nancy looked at her as if saying 'do you really want us to answer that?' and Mandy blushed realizing her goof up.

"I guess he must have picked this job up to make some cash before the summer was over." Nancy said almost mesmerised by his physique as he sat there.

As much as Nancy didn't like him even she couldn't deny he looked good. She hid it from Steve though not wanting to cause a fight or hurt his feelings and looked away to lean down and kiss his cheek.

"Steve, I'm going to join my friends in the pool, okay?" He lifted up and smiled nodding going back to his lazy rest in the chair. It was obvious he was good where he was.

"Alright, let's go, ladies. We have a date with a pool." Nikki grinned and took Mandy's hand helping her up and setting down her food basket before she even had a chance to finish her chicken strip which

earned a small grumble from her.

They all walked to the edge of the pool by the steps in the shallow end. Nancy took her time getting in slowly to adjust to the temperature. Mandy just sat on the edge sticking her legs and feet in and dangling them there hoping to God Billy would not notice her.

She avoided him as if completely mentally blocking him out where he sat and wouldn't dare look up at him. Because of this she had no idea if he was looking at her or not and it made her feel really uncomfortable.

Nikki went to the deep end and got it over with taking a jump to cannonball into the pool. She made a medium splash and swam over to the shallow end meeting up with Nancy.

They both turned to look at Mandy getting on her slightly for just sitting there.

"Oh, come on. You're not getting in?" Mandy shook her head looking down at the sparkling water.

"If I get in the water will make my T-shirt stick to my body. It's... I'm good here."

Nancy and Nikki exchanged glances with one another eye rolling slightly and looked up at Billy for her knowing the cause of her hesitation.

"He's not even looking, Mandy. Come on. Enjoy yourself. Live a little!" This slightly boosted her confidence and so she nodded and slowly dipped herself in at the pool's edge giving a small cry when she felt her warm body trying to adjust to the cool temperatures of the water. They both tugged her in the rest of the way playfully and she went under allowing her long hair to get soaked from her scalp to her ends and when she came up she brushed it out of her face.

"Okay. Shit. He's looking." Was all she heard Nancy say.

Struggling to get the water out of her eyes and see clearly again, she looked up on impulse and saw Billy staring down at her directly. He slowly began to remove his shades and stuck one end of them in his

mouth slowly chewing on the end of it as he watched her. Her stomach fluttered and burned inside.

She had tried so hard to not feel that while seeing him in school the past few days but catching her off of her usual game of ignoring him and looking as toned and gorgeous as he did had reminded her of all the reasons why she was trying to push him away in the first place.

He made a fire burn in her stomach for him and it set her on edge making her gasp and slightly lose her breath. It was too late now. He knew she was here. He would most likely spend his entire watch up on that chair sneaking glances at her while doing his job. As soon as they switched lifeguards again she just knew he would be gunning for her.

She grabbed her chest with her hands and arms covering them, self conscious of the white shirt sticking to her curves and showing off the roundness of her breasts to his smoldering stare.

She saw him run his tongue over his shades slightly at the end of it and then slip them back on. Mandy wanted to drown right there in the water but then that would mean he would just dive in and have an excuse to touch her.

*Damnit. Why? Every single damn time. I just cannot escape him!*

She thought miserably, hiding half her face in the water and still trying to cover herself from his piercing stare. He finally turned his head away to look somewhere else most likely remembering he had a job to do and had to look all around to be alert.

Taking his whistle in his hands he twirled it a few times and leaned back in his chair showing off his abs and chest to anyone who wanted to see, including Mandy.

"I'm sorry, Mandy. Just ignore him, okay? Swim and have fun. It doesn't matter what he thinks or does. If he comes over to you just do what you've been doing in school." Nikki tried to pep talk her so she wouldn't flee and try to leave but stay and have fun with them.

Nancy nodded in agreement and they both swam over to her to

provide her with cover and support. Taking a deep breath Mandy nodded and decided that was exactly what she would do. She stopped caring about his stares and how he tried to show his body off to her. She swam around in the pool splashing and having fun with her best girl friends and didn't give it another thought.

Once they were done getting their fill of cooling down they got out at the steps in the shallow end and walked over grabbing their towels to dry their hair a bit. Mandy finished munching on her chicken strips and decided to lay out on the pool lounge once finished and take in some sun. She closed her eyes and relaxed.

If Billy wanted to play that game she could too. Suddenly she was vicious with her body allowing him a good look of her sprawling out on her back and lifting one leg. She put both arms behind her head and lay there peacefully. All thoughts of Billy purged from her mind as her friends sat talking about random subjects nearby.

Billy had been looking around when he noticed Mandy Hawkins at the pool edge with her friends. He grinned thinking of the luck he had of seeing her here. He was hopeful for it but he never fully expected it to happen. It was a one in a million chance meeting as he had no idea she came to this pool. Too bad he would only be working here for another two weeks and he was almost positive that after seeing him here she most likely wouldn't come back.

He had to try and approach her while on his break and see if he could get her to talk to him. He was tired of her silly games of ignoring him and needed to know if she still had that look in her eyes for him or if her body would still respond to him as it had before.

When his shift change was up he got down off the tower and Heather tried to talk to him while getting up but he just handed her a bottle of water and kept walking, leaving her confused in his wake behind him and looking put out.

As he walked along the pool's edge he froze. Her friends were there and he wasn't sure if they would allow him to approach her so closely. When he saw Nancy and Steve along with Mandy's little blonde friend get up to head over to the snack bar he grinned seeing now was his chance. So there was a God of fortune after all and it

was smiling on him.

Mandy was laid out on the lounge her eyes closed completely unaware of his approach. Each time he tried to walk towards her he kept stopping himself, walking back the way he came, and then turning around to walk even closer to her. This was definitely not like him.

Why was he so nervous to walk up to her? He noticed the older women staring longingly at him but he paid it no mind as he passed them up and then sat down in a chair that was beside her by a few feet. How badly he wanted a smoke for his nerves right now but due to company policy he couldn't smoke in the pool area. He would have to go out to his car to do it.

Cursing himself for having nothing to calm his nerves he ran his fingers through his curly blond hair and just sat for a minute looking down at her not wanting to say anything. He did... but he didn't want to. He wanted to admire her form stretched out in the pool chair but he wanted to announce his presence to her hoping she would be responsive to him.

"Nice sunny day out." He said and immediately regretted his first choice of words. She startled and sat up noticing him there and flattened herself against the lounge in complete surprise.

*Real smooth, Hargrove. What the fuck is wrong with you?*

He scolded himself closing his eyes wondering where all his charm and charisma had gone to that he had full control over earlier. Mandy was like a blackhole that just sucked it all out of him leaving him at a loss of how to operate around her.

The older women just a few feet away, except for Mrs Wheeler, were all scowling jealously as he talked to her but tried to not pay any attention or at least seemed like they weren't. He softly laughed at their distaste for the one he chose to put his attention on and not them.

Mandy immediately grabbed her towel once she was no longer paralyzed and Billy looked over at the snack bar seeing just how little

time he had to talk to her before Steve and her two friends would return. He could pretty much guess at her request they would drive him off.

"Hi. I didn't know you came here to swim. I work here as a lifeguard."

He pointed to his red whistle on his lanyard and tugged on it playfully. He said it proudly as if he wasn't overstating the obvious. He could kick himself for talking like such an idiot and babbling. He just wished she would say something to him. Anything. Give him a sign that she was still flustered in his presence and still curious about him.

"No way. I had no idea. Imagine that. Well, I DID come here. That might change now..." Mandy said in her familiar light soft voice dripping full of sarcasm and biting at him angrily.

It made him grin. He saw her being feisty with him again, that look in her eyes, and it was like a breath of fresh air to him in a strange way he couldn't explain. It almost relieved him in hearing how nasty she was talking to him after making him go almost a whole week without any words from her at all. Almost made his heart thud even harder in his chest.

"Don't be like that. If you come here you'll be in perfectly good hands because if anything happens to you... I can dive in and make sure you are safe."

He said the cheesiest line to her she had ever heard and it was obvious he was none too happy with himself about it either. She rolled her eyes and he groaned at himself for not coming up with something better.

"Oh, be still, my beating heart. How noble of you." She snapped at him with a sickly sweet smile and covered up more with her towel closing her eyes and turning suddenly on her side trying to ignore him.

"I thought so. Anyway, do you have any plans for tonight? I'm off work at sunset and I was just wondering if..." Before he could finish she turned to him once more and looked absolutely beside herself

with anger at him.

It took him aback at the level of hostility for him in her eyes now. Glaring she got up out of the chair and walked off leaving him to get up and follow her. He trailed behind her calling her name trying to get her to stop and just talk to him.

A lot of the people around the pool, especially females that were interested in him, had their eyes on them as she practically degraded him in public. She was being her old fiery self with him alright. He got his wish and then some. He looked around with a slight chuckle being put on the spot when she whirled on him putting her finger towards his bare chest to drive home her words to him.

"Billy? I wouldn't finish that sentence if I were you. I am not interested. What will it take to get you to see that?!"

He looked around laughing nervously at her sudden explosion and used his hands to try and tell her to simmer it down a little bit placing his fingers to his lips in attempts to get her to calm down and not yell.

She said it while folding her arms over her chest not sparing him any dignity as she puffed up in anger at him not really caring who saw. She was at her last straw with him and was obviously tired of him making attempts to speak to her let alone be near her.

In that moment he got sort of angry, his pride taking a hit at her shredding him in front of people. Heather, the ladies, everyone who was watching. He shot back with the only thing he could think of.

"What will it take for YOU to get it that I AM interested in you, Mandy? Don't be like this. Please just let me take you out sometime. That's all I want. To show you a good time. Is that so wrong?"

Now his smoothness was coming back. He would make her see his side of things with simple logic and an appeal to emotions. But a part of him meant it too.

His words hit her sharply and for the life of her she couldn't contest them or think of a single reason why it would be wrong. Especially

when he made it sound so simple and innocent the way he did. She had no answer for that. Her reply caught in her throat and lingered on the tip of her tongue as she stood there stunned making eye contact with him unable to tear away.

His blue eyes searched her sparkling green ones out of desperation. She could see it in his eyes and read it all over his body language. He desperately wanted to go out on a date with her. It really was that simple. At least, that's what he was saying.

"Please don't humiliate me in front of everyone at my place of work. Just talk to me, Mandy. I've been trying for a week to get you to respond and you've been giving me the cold shoulder. I don't understand you at all."

More truth, despite him not wanting to admit to it. Her eyes just sort of forced it out of him. Still, he was grinding it out through his teeth softly as a part warning to her and a part plead for her to just level with him.

"Well, good. Maybe I don't want you to." She replied to him still firm but a little bit softer now in her volume level.

Most of the heads were turning away now minding their own business and forgetting about them. He breathed a sigh of relief but caught Heather still staring. She looked very crushed.

He thought it was funny that she might be looking at the two of them thinking they were a couple having a fight. He tried to stop himself from laughing out loud at this because that is exactly what it looked like. Almost felt like it too.

But hearing Mandy say that to him, that's when he finally understood it. She was intentionally clamming up on him and blocking him out. Keeping him away from her and running away from him. She did not want to let him in. Just as he suspected all along. But why?

"Why?" He asked, echoing his thoughts out loud, his eyes looking deep and longingly into hers wanting an answer to the mystery of her constant disconnect from him.



She stopped about to open her mouth but he caught her on that one. When she recovered, he waited patiently.

"Because... because..." she tried to spit it out but couldn't seem to finish her sentence.

"Because?..." Billy trailed off standing there but scooting a little closer to her.

At this point he didn't care who was watching them, oddly enough. He tried to get closer to her and she backed up slightly when he could feel the warmth of their bodies about to collide. His dry warm muscular frame against her soft supple much cooler one. Like fire and ice.

"I don't know why. Just because. Okay? Because." Her eyes said she wasn't being fully honest with him.

There was something there preventing her from enjoying him and his company. Was he truly that bad of a person to repel her in such a way? He just had to figure it out!

She said this throwing her hands up in the air and sighing which made him softly begin to grin at her wickedly. This was the Mandy he knew. The edgy sarcastic cloistered and defiant girl.

He was enjoying and basking in the scene she was making now out of frustration of him simply being so close to her. She didn't like that he was trying to get inside her armor to weaken it. He was getting to her and it was much better for her to react like this than for her to coldly ignore him. The curl of the edge of his lips rising and playing about his mouth making her blush at him and try to look elsewhere besides his face.

Maybe she wasn't lying. Maybe she really had no idea why she didn't like him or why she didn't want them to get close to one another.

He looked her up and down helplessly, unable to stop his eyes from looking at her body in the semi hidden bathing suit beneath her drying t-shirt that covered her. Even in swimwear at the pool she attempted layers. It hugged her form incredibly and the wet spots of

her shirt showing portions of her curves where it rested heavy against her made his eyes take it all in hungrily.

She noticed him tracing his eyes over her body and put her arms back over her chest and stomach beginning to tap her foot at him. Looking over to the snack shack he noticed that her friends were now beginning to return. He had to ask her fast, which left him no time to be smooth about it.

"Mandy. Please. Go out on a date with me. Just one date. I promise you will have a great time." He looked at her with practically puppy dog eyes and slightly sticking out his lower lip to appear semi sadly desperate. He was inching closer.

"And by a great time do you mean you putting your hands all over my body without my consent? I know how you are, Hargrove. I'm not stupid. I've watched you with other girls around school. Including Tina."

Mandy replied barely able to breath as he was practically towering right over her with his face tilted down towards her now. So close he could reach out and wrap her in his strong arms.

He shut his eyes at the mention of the mistake that was Tina. He was only using her to get to Mandy but now he couldn't shake her off and Mandy wouldn't let it go. He wasn't interested in her but he kept her around almost as if to soothe his shattered ego at the cruel hands of Mandy breaking it apart. Making him want what he could not have. But Tina wasn't Mandy and never would be. That was obvious when she was all over him and his thoughts were elsewhere besides on her.

"No. I can keep my hands to myself... if you really want me to." What a lie he told himself.

He knew he wouldn't be able to keep his hands off of her. He wanted so bad to touch her it made him wish he had never laid eyes on her in the first place. It had been all he was thinking about all week long. And even more so when alone in his room at night.

But he would have to struggle to in order to get her to trust him. To take things slow and steady and not scare her off. To work her up to

allowing him to touch her.

Mandy was a good girl and fragile. And standing as close as he was to her, he could smell the sweetness of her sunblock on her warm skin and the pool water in her hair mixed with her own scent of shampoo. It made him want to groan and place his hands in her hair and lean in to take all of her scent in up close.

His breath was gentle, warm, and it carressed her softly over her face. His beautiful curls spilling over his forehead, neck, shoulders, and ears, lit up radiantly by the sunshine. His eyes were two icy deep pools of blue that practically paralyzed her in the spot she was standing in. His half naked torso barely registered to her this time as she focused more on his face and less on the rest of him. She swallowed hard.

She only had the energy and resistance to give a soft snort in response.

"I swear. Pick a time and place. Anywhere. Anytime. I will pick you up and take you. I will show you that even a bad boy like me can be oh so good. So good to you, Mandy."

He licked his lips gently and barely letting his tongue come out to play about the soft seam that parted them. She couldn't help but notice it and it made her shudder in places she dared not think about.

His mouth was so beautiful she couldn't deny that. Sometimes when she was weakened by him she wondered what it would be like to feel his wide lovely mouth and his warm soft lips pressed against hers. Her stomach was raging with butterflies as he stood there begging her to go with him.

"I don't know. If I say no, you won't stop until I say yes. If I say yes, you'll just tell everyone more horrible things about me. You can't seem to keep your mouth shut about how you feel about me, right Hargrove?"

She turned to walk away from him and he gently grabbed her wrist but held her softly not being forceful. She spun back around.

"I didn't say anything about you to anyone, Mandy. I truly don't know what you're talking about."

*God, what a liar. Such a good one too.*

"Yeah? Well I have a friend who has told me otherwise. Got any plans to 'ruin me' on this date? Hmm?"

He still looked at her confused. She watched him closely. It was as if he truly had no idea what she was talking about. Was his face as good a liar as his mouth was?

Billy tried to connect the dots on this. That did certainly seem like a sentence he would use and lord knows he had thought about it in his head many times. But he had never said anything of the sort out loud to anyone about any female, least of all Mandy. He had used it in the past around Tommy and Carol but never when talking directly about someone from school and definitely not Mandy.

He knew better than to gloat about plans before they were fully carried out at the risk of being shut down before he could even achieve them. Surely, he was smarter than that. On top of that a good golden rule, one of which he was actually strict in following almost as much as his father Neil's house rules, was that you didn't talk openly about the person you wanted to sleep with or had slept with. It was in bad taste.

Tommy? Carol maybe? Tina upset at him asking her about Mandy? Did any one of them begin using his familiar language to start these rumors in order to make it get back around to her as if he were the one that said them? He looked her in the eyes and moved his hand sliding it down from her wrist to hold her hand instead to show his sincerity at least on this one thing.

"Mandy, you have my word. I did not talk bad about you to anyone. I swear it."

She stayed and he let go of her hand eventually. Her look softened once more towards him. To her he most likely looked very upset at her statement as well as concerned.

Mandy pondered this. Maybe Tucker was lying? Or maybe he got some bad information? Who would start rumors like these about them? And why?

"Okay... so maybe you didn't spread things around about me that were degrading. Still, give me one good reason why I should." She lifted her chin showing her bold and daring spirit to him once more and he smiled. Genuinely smiled at her.

"Because. Because. I don't know why. Just because. Okay?" He used the same thing she said earlier to him and sent it right back at her. His face was serene and lost all arrogance on it as if he were being real with her.

She couldn't help but slowly smile in response to his playfulness and her anger subsided allowing him to see through to her softer side, another part of her he liked, the shy gentle part of her that she showed when he cornered her.

Billy backed off slowly getting a small grin on his face and giving her some room. Her armor was down. Now to arrange a time and place.

"Give me a time, Mandy. I'll be at your door."

She paused and looked at the ground.

"If I do this you have to agree to it being on my terms." She said slyly and he couldn't help but see that her regular smile turned into a mischevious one.

"Okay..." he trailed off.

"You said I could pick the time and place, correct?" He nodded slowly and bit his lower lip almost getting a feeling in his gut that he would regret choosing his words so poorly out of his desperation to be alone with her.

"My place. Tonight. Come over after you get off work. We'll have that great time you want so badly. We can hang out in the living room on the couch, make some popcorn, and watch something together."

Friday night was perfect for this. She shyly put a finger to her mouth,

as if nibbling on it gently while swaying side to side baiting him, her long soft black hair falling all over her pale neck and shoulders. Seeing him watch her do it she knew it had worked.

As Billy looked at her doing this his stomach twisted in knots. She was the very picture of innocence and playfulness, shy and soft, and he practically groaned with a pang of lust burning him inside at her words. He stifled it as hard as he could when he looked at her sweet tender face.

His need for her had ripped through him when he thought of being alone with her on the couch and putting his arms around her. Moving his hands slowly, ever so slowly, until she would allow him to touch her almost anywhere he wanted. He could practically hear her soft noises he imagined she would make as he did so. He would not be focused on anything that was on the television, that was for sure.

Closing his eyes for a moment he opened them and nodded with a stupidly happy wide smile stretched across his lips.

"I'll be there. Count on it. See you soon, Mandy." His voice was low, deep, switched on for her. She tried hard to keep her composure through it.

He stepped back over to her to raise her hand and kiss it softly before he jogged slowly back over to his tower looking behind at Mandy a few times being careless around the pool. Heather had been pointing angrily to her watch and he saw it was time for him to switch positions between them.

When he was gone, Mandy's friends returned with their snacks and had noticed that Billy was over here talking to her. They didn't at first but when they did they made their way over as fast as they could.

"Is he bothering you, Mandy?" Steve asked glaring but not fully able to look so menacing with a glob of ketchup stained on the corner of his mouth from his hotdog.

Nikki and Nancy laughed and one of them handed him a napkin indicating where his mess was on his face with their own. He wiped

it sheepishly.

"No, I'm fine. Really." She said keeping the delicious secret and deal between them all to herself. She could tell no one or it would ruin everything she had planned for her and Billy.

"What did he want?" Nancy asked taking a bite out of her nachos and sitting down on the lounge.

"Oh, just to be his usual charming self. I handled it. It's alright." Mandy said looking over at Billy who was at the top of his tower smirking at her through his shades. He was clearly excited for tonight and in a great mood.

"Okay, well, as long as you're alright and still having fun. Glad he didn't ruin your time being here with us."

Nikki said happily handing Mandy a small cup of ice cream which she absentmindedly accepted.

"If he tries anything, I'll talk to him." Steve said trying to comfort her while also trying to show off. Nancy hugged him close not wanting him to as she knew how bad Billy had antagonized him in the gym and what he was capable of.

Mandy tried to ignore him but often found her eyes always going back to looking him over as she lounged in the pool chair not wanting to go back into the water.

She was still watching him and caught him staring at her often in return. She could try and fight it all she wanted to but she was still unable to take her eyes off of Billy. Still unable to think of anything else other than what she had just done and offered to him. Mandy only hoped she wouldn't regret this and that he would behave himself as he often promised he would. She highly doubted it but hoped for it all the same.

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## **8. The Lifeguard & His Date - 2**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

### **Chapter 8 - THE LIFEGUARD & HIS DATE**

**(Part 2)**

#### **Summary:**

Billy prepares for his date with Mandy. Mandy is getting ready too. He's thinking of what he can say to get further with her but everything keeps coming out wrong.

He walks over and knocks on the door but he wasn't expecting what she had in store for him. Not by a longshot.

After the movies and her parents go to bed for the night, much to her father's unhappiness in leaving them alone out there, they watch one last movie together. One of Mandy's favorites. When it's over they say goodnight outside on her porch. Something unexpected happens.

:D



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Mandy managed to make some excuse to get Nikki on board with leaving the pool early before it closed. Having only been there for about two hours, they said their farewells to Steve and Nancy.

As they were leaving the pool Billy actually waved to her with his same eager grin all over his face. She waved back and gave a little wink at him catching him completely off guard which was not custom for her to do at all to any boy. She was shocking herself with how bold she was being towards him and imagined his face matched how she felt on the inside at doing it.

But Billy wasn't any boy. He was a boy who was planning on getting lucky tonight and being alone with her. She had no delusions about his false promise to keep his hands to himself knowing that was impossible for someone like him who overly appreciated the anatomy of the opposite sex.

"So, did he say anything to you?" Nikki asked while they were driving. She wanted all the juicy details of their meetup at the pool having missed it for herself to get food with their friends.

"Just his usual comments, really. Nothing important." Mandy semi frowned but tried to maintain a straight non guilty face.

She hated to lie and never really did as she was raised not to. It made her feel even more wrong to lie to her best friend. But she just knew if she told her what they talked about it would open a whole can of worms she did not want to try and put back into the can, wriggling, writhing, and impossible to sort out.

It would either make Nikki very angry with Billy over the supposed rumors or it would make her launch into a 'Mandy, I am going to give you a makeover tonight!' frenzied speech. She would be forced to try and explain to Nikki that it wasn't an actual date while she would have to sit in her room at the vanity for an hour or so as she dolled her up for Billy.

She would rather neither of those scenarios took place so she kept her silence on what she had planned for tonight. Mandy was laughing on

the inside eager for Billy to show up and could only imagine how excited he must be getting as the time drew nearer.

Since the pool closed at seven and she reasoned it would take him roughly twenty minutes to drive home, at normal speed limit anyway, and then maybe another thirty minutes to an hour for him to get dressed and ready depending on his grooming rituals, he should be at her house by eight thirty or nine.

*Perfect. The timing is just perfect. I can't wait to see the look on his face.* She thought wickedly and grinned so wide Nikki was stealing side glances at her.

Tonight would be the most fun night ever she could possibly have with Billy and in her own home would be a safer setting. She sure hoped he was going to be good and ready and make himself look absolutely irresistible for her.

"Okay, something's up. Why won't you just tell me?" Nikki said dryly with a slight huff of angst at being left out. Mandy straightened up and put a normal innocent look on her face.

"Because, Nikki, there's nothing to tell." She tried to look sweet at her friend to make her believe her.

"Uh huh." Nikki eyerolled her and sighed slightly pouting.

"Okay. He asked me on a date. Like he has been all week that I have been ignoring. We had a disagreement and when he finally gave up he left." It was partly true. She could roll with that.

"But I saw him kissing your hand and looking happy when he left." Nikki smiled slyly sideways at her. She didn't miss a thing with her eagle eyes.

*Damn. Ummmm...*

Lying was hard because if you tell one lie you have to keep lying to keep it going and it just eventually snowballs out of control and eventually the truth comes out. Another reason Mandy hated lying.

"Right. Ummm. Well, you see..." Mandy tried to figure out how to

explain that one. Nikki now kept her eyes on the road but she was seeing through her friends poor attempts to fib to her.

"You have a date with him tonight, don't you? Oh, God, that means he's gonna have to greet your folks. That means he's going to have to meet your dad!" Nikki laughed tapping her hands on her steering wheel highly amused at this.

Mandy sunk down in the seat not wanting to think about that part. Her father hated boys being over with her unless it was Alex or Tucker whom she trusted. If her dad knew about Tucker having a thing for her that would end real fast.

Nikki looked real proud of herself at piecing it altogether and imagining Mandy's father terrifying Billy. She had no idea that technically he already did because Mandy never told her about the welcome dinner party he attended with his family at their house.

"Your dad gonna roast him? I can just see it now. He brings down the rifle and begins cleaning it in front of Billy. Billy begins to second guess ever getting involved with you. And then BAM. Your problem is solved because your dad will scare him off just like all the other boys. Mission complete."

Nikki cackled at her own reply and was obviously picturing it all in her head.

It was wild how Nikki could spin an imaginary story out of barely any information and craft it better than any Dungeonmaster for board games or fantasy novel authors. Mandy always thought she would be perfect as a DM for Dungeons and Dragons but she never wanted to play the game with her and The Party whenever they went to Nancy's.

She said it was boring and for nerds and then said 'no offense, Mandy.' after her comment realizing her best friend was in fact a nerd. She had no idea just how much time and effort went into setting those things up or how fun they could be using one's imagination while playing it out. She just never bothered to try it so Mandy didn't pressure her to.

She often wondered what Nikki's character would be. With how much Nikki loved boys and kissing she imagined her to be an exotic elven tavern wench or perhaps a redheaded brothel girl or maybe a sexy succubus. She would no doubt put all her points in charisma and be a flirtatious hussy of a character on the board which might make all the Party members extremely grossed out or uncomfortable. Boys their age didn't think the way like Billy, Tommy, Tucker, and Alex did.

"Yeah, uh... look don't say anything, okay Nikki? I have plans and to talk about this will ruin them. You have to swear to me you won't speak of tonight with anyone." Mandy gave her friend her best serious 'swear on your mother's grave' look and Nikki held out her pinky while driving. It was the ultimate swear. It could not be broken.

Mandy accepted her pinky with her own and they locked them together making the deal.

"Well, here we are. Are you sure you don't want me to come up and..." Mandy quickly jumped out of the car and grabbed her stuff thanking her friend for the ride and the wonderful time at the pool.

"Okay... you're... welcome." Nikki trailed off sad her friend wouldn't let her deck her out for tonight but then shook her head laughing and waved driving off to her house. The sun was sinking fast so Mandy had very little time left to prepare before Billy would arrive.

Unlocking the door she walked in and shut it behind her smiling at how nicely she had set everything up tonight for her and Billy. She would make haste to shower, fix her hair up very sexy just the way he liked it, and find a decent good looking but modest outfit that she knew would totally get him going.

Tonight was going to be the best night ever and she hoped he would stay and finish it out with her.

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Parking the Camaro in the driveway Billy stepped out of it taking a slow drag on his cigarette. He looked up to the house across the road

as he had done many times. Smirking he was completely happy with knowing he was finally getting his way with Mandy. She was finally coming around and warming up to him.

Thinking back on what she said about the rumors going around the school he somewhat grimaced as he ground out his cancer stick with his boot. It had to have been Tommy or Carol he was almost sure of it. Most likely Tommy was trying to block him from making any headway with Mandy.

He had noticed several times how undeniably lustful Tommy had looked at her and guessed he must have had a thing for shy nerds like Mandy. Perhaps he had a thing for her specifically for a lot longer than he knew since Tommy was around long before he was. Billy wondered if she and Tommy had possibly done anything together but he quickly forced that budding accusation out of his head.

Not only did it make him feel slightly jealous and possessive, but it also made him feel stupid for even thinking Mandy would hook up with someone like Tommy. Then again, here she was hooking up with someone like him. She confused him because he couldn't decide if she was a virgin tease or a loose girl playing the part of an innocent virgin to get guys hot to trot for her.

There were times he could swear she had not done much of anything with any guy and then moments where her undeniable flirty fiery self was shown to him that made him second guess that initial assumption. Like earlier at the pool when she had bit her finger at him, all the times she bit her own lip, or winking to him as he was up in the chair.

Just what was her game here that she was playing? Was she the type of girl to go steady for a while and then go all the way? Or would she string him along and never put out? He growled low in his throat deciding he would not let that become an option. He was going to seduce Mandy Hawkins and unleash her wild side for him one way or another. Tonight would be a great start.

Tearing his eyes away from the upper bedroom window that had its light on with the blinds closed he locked up his car and headed to the house. It was a Friday night so he imagined Maxine would have

gotten a lift with Neil or Susan to the arcade or was hanging out with her nerdy little friends at one of their houses.

Susan's car was here but his father's Ford truck wasn't so they might be out together too for the night. Why didn't he just boldly invite Mandy to come over to his house where they could definitely be alone? Then he remembered that one of his father's strict rules was to never have a girl alone with him in his house and if he caught him there with one there would be hell to pay.

Billy frowned. Well, hopefully Mandy was alone tonight too at her house, otherwise why would she have invited him over to her place for a date to be together on the couch? She obviously had a movie night planned for the two of them. So tame, really,. He would rather take her out on the town and be wild and free with her. Maybe even do a bit of drinking or take her out to Lover's Lake for a makeout session hot and steamy in the back of his car. He closed his eyes picturing that and groaned softly.

Walking inside the house with all these fantasies going for the two of them he called out but no one answered. The house was dark and empty. Switching on his light in his room he quickly stripped out of his work clothes and wrapped a towel around himself. He would shower really good for her tonight and make sure he smelled even better for her for when they would get close on the couch. He wanted her mouth to water for him and for her to be completely helpless under his touch, his gaze, and his embrace.

After his shower he did his usual grooming in his room in front of his mirror. He styled and combed his curls plumping them up a bit teasing them and making them look fuller with a little more bounce while using his favorite Aqua-Net hairspray. For the scent to drive Mandy wild over him he misted some of his Estée Lauder Aramis cologne. He kept the bottle at a distance letting the mist settle gently onto his skin. Grinning he knew this scent would work great if he let it lightly coat his chest and wore one of his button down shirts open tonight.

Making an extra effort he lightly misted some towards his groin and stepped into it before putting on his tight denim Levi jeans and buckled his black leather belt.

Winking in the mirror at himself he blew smoke from his cigarette out of his nose and began practicing the lines he would use on her tonight. Shaking his head nothing he came up with felt like it would suit him to say to her. It felt too corny. Too forced. Maybe it would work on the other girls but Mandy was a smart cookie. She wouldn't fall for that.

As he stood before his reflection admiring how good his hair looked and how clean shaven he was around his mustache that he trimmed up, he looked deep into his own blue eyes.

"Mandy, you have a lovely home." He sighed.

*That was lame.*

"Mandy, you look absolutely... terrible. No, no, that's just terrible." Trailing off he wanted so desperately to come up with something more original all it's own just for her. Something to make her heart race for him.

"It's really nice to be here alone with you, Mandy. I've been thinking about you a lot lately." Closer to the truth, and while good, almost too sappy. He really could do better.

*Jesus, why the hell can't I figure something suave to say to her? It's as if all I know about charming a girl is out the fucking window when it comes to her!*

Turning from side to side in the mirror checking out his legs and ass in his denim jeans he smiled knowing at least he looked good for her. That was a very big start. To get Mandy where he wanted her half the battle was his looks and appearance and the other half was how smooth he could whisper things in her ear to make her panties drop. But it would not be easy.

He frowned thinking of how she had ignored him successfully for almost a full week making him feel so pitiful and desperate to hear her voice. Even if just to snap at him. He was angry about taking hits from his father over being wreckless in his moods because of her twisting him up around her finger.

It almost made him want to give her a revenge fuck for it before dropping her when he was done with her. He frowned at his negative thoughts and his bitterness shoving it aside not wanting to foul his mood up. She had said yes and was giving him a chance. So the pain had been worth it as long as she was going to be compliant with him and not ignore him anymore.

*How can I possibly be whipped when I haven't even had it yet?*

He sighed and lowered his head then looked once more in the mirror finishing off his cigarette and butting it. He would have to brush his teeth and tongue all over again to be fresh for her after smoking. Making sure he had his gum he tried again.

"Mandy, I want you so badly. No girl has ever done this to me before. I don't understand but I just have to have you, now. Come closer and let me hold you, rabbit."

*Rabbit?*

He blinked. It was perfect for her! She had these vicious claws when she would bite at him with her sass. She was soft and gentle when not mean to him. And she did her hair up in these long pigtails that almost looked like long soft rabbit ears hanging down her backside. Like a lop eared rabbit. He liked it. A pet name just for her.

"Rabbit, I..." No. He would never use the L word and lie with it to get in a girls pants. That was off the table and out of the question. He would think of something else. A better way to make her melt for him and into him. He just hoped when the time came he wouldn't be tongue tied, unless it was her tongue tied to his.

The thought of that made him shudder and put his body on vibrate for her. He felt himself getting semi erect and had to think other thoughts to cool himself down.

Putting on his black button down leaving it open a few buttons enough to show his chest and let her get a good bead on his scent he checked his hair one last time and then finally decided to grab his black leather jacket and keys to head over to her place.



Locking up the house he walked over across the street grinning like a moron obviously very excited for their first date together and jogged the rest of the way. The pleasant warm night making way for cooler temperatures felt good on his slightly bared chest.

Standing in front of the greenish mint colored door he wrapt his knuckles gently on the wooden surface and tried to contain his goofy grin putting on a serious and smoldering look for when she would answer. He had to play it cool and aloof and yet be romantic towards her. But he could never let her know just how happy and excited he was to see her, because even he didn't know why or understand it.

After a few knocks he was rewarded with her standing in front of him the door slightly ajar. He thought he heard voices but she came out and closed the door standing before him in all her oddly beautiful perfection.

She was dressed up in an off the shoulder black soft looking top with an equally dark black skirt that flowed just below her knees and she had on a black pair of sandal shoes. He admired her cute toes and her bare ankles unable to resist looking a little higher at her soft pale legs.

Once his eyes met hers again she was blushing slightly at how he was looking at her. She had her long feathery black hair down and it flowed all around her gracefully. Leaning in slightly he could smell she had actually put perfume on for him. It had the slight scent of vanilla and warm honey and it made him almost close his eyes when catching it on the light breeze outside.

"Hey, rabbit. Ready for our date? I've been thinking about you. You look absolutely mouth watering tonight."

As he leaned against the door frame with one arm closing the gap between them inching closer he saw her face scrunch up at his new name for her. Well, he thought it was cute. Apparently she didn't like it. He groaned inwardly at using partial truth of his feelings for her mixed with a cheesy pining statement. Could he be more fucking obvious to her?

"Okay..." She started just staring at him as if he was the world's worst

date she could ever have and it almost made him blush at her in return.

"So, glad you could make it. We have the popcorn all set up and ready and the first movie is about to start. Come on in." She grinned at him and before he could put two and two together on what she said Mandy opened the door and took his hand pulling him gently inside.

He smelled very nice. An earthy wooded scent mixed with his leather jacket almost like an exotic fruity incense. It made her somewhat dizzy and the sight of his chest barely covered by his shirt made her stomach flutter.

He had obviously gone all out to look good for her and she in turn dressed nice for him. Tonight she would be just out of his reach knowing it would kill him every second of not being able to get close to her like she knew he wanted to.

"We?..." he started to ask as she pulled him inside before he could think or react.

Stepping inside, Billy looked around her living room noting how nice it was. Warm and cozy feeling like a proper home. This would only be the second time he had ever been here, the first time being the welcoming dinner that her parents had invited him and his "family" to in the middle of the week.

Mandy had ignored him at school but she couldn't be rude and ignore him much in front of her folks so she talked light that night keeping it civil but not personal with him. Neil had practically embarrassed him every chance he could when talking over the meal at the dinner table but he tried hard to ignore him and focus only on Mandy and her family.

When his eyes looked to the couch, the place where he wanted to cuddle and touch her, he saw it filled with her family sitting there instead. Mandy noticed the look on his face and seemed to grin wickedly. She was playing games again with him. Tonight wasn't a date of them being alone. Tonight was a family movie night and she had tricked him into being a part of it.

Her father looked at him with a slight frown at how he was so overdressed for his daughter most likely knowing in his thoughts what Billy had planned for her. But his plans would be foiled tonight as he would be forced to sit in the single chair of the living room while she sat on the couch with her family. She had done this on purpose. Just more teasing and keeping herself distant from him while making him want her as good as she looked and smelled tonight.

Her mother was the only one to give him a warm smile and greeting as her father sat rigid looking him up and down with distaste. He had been so nice at the dinner but now he was glaring daggers at him while trying to remain polite with a pinched expression on his face.

"Hello, Billy. So nice to have you!" Her mom said in a very happy and content manner.

Her eyes said it all. She approved of him and liked when he was over feeling he was good for her daughter. It made him feel guilty at some of the thoughts he was having about Mandy but he smiled back greeting her regardless of how off she may be about him and his intentions.

"Hargrove. Nice to see you again. Have a seat. There's popcorn on the table and some soda if you would like."

Rick's tone was edgy but when her mother put her hand on his arm he had to soften it up and be more friendly, very much against his will.

Mandy laughed and closed the door locking it behind them as Billy took his seat. When he sat in the chair she came over to him and winked without her parents seeing and could see he was very lost about tonight being the opposite of what he expected it to be.

She leaned over purposefully giving him a small show of her cleavage from the top handing him a can of soda of his choosing. He looked up at her with a disappointed look but she feigned innocence and ignorance as if she did not know the source of his ire. She sat down next to her father and snuggled into him as he gave her a bear hug.

Billy could see the love her family had for her and it made him feel sort of warm inside at the sight of it. It was something foreign to him he was not used to getting for himself. He almost envied her.

"Movie night. Wonderful! I'm thrilled, thank you." He said trying to smile with a very polite chipper tone and remain every inch the gentleman her parents thought him to be.

*Great. This is going to be a loooooong night.* Billy thought sourly, despite his admiration for all of them, but still trying to keep his charming smile not wanting to be any less in front of her parents.

"Mom, dad, I'm going to go into the kitchen real fast. I will be right back. I'll get the napkins, butter, and salt in case someone wants extra on theirs and some extra bowls." Her father nodded and Billy stood up when she did.

"Do you need help? I don't mind." Billy offered eagerly, most likely wanting this chance to be with her alone to speak to her about her dirty trick and move in close to her without the eyes of her parents on them.

Her father practically jumped up in hasty protest but once more his wife calmed him and gave him a look as if to warn him to leave them alone. She guessed that since they were both here with them there was nothing Billy could possibly do that would make her father want to toss him out on his ass. He was a very protective father and he picked up on that right away upon their first meeting. Mandy was his little girl and Billy was a threat to that.

"Dear, let them be." Katherine said softly. She had Mandy's little brother, Calvin, laying in her lap and was tousling his curly sandy brown hair with her fingers. The kid looked sort of worn out already but kept his eyes open for the movie while sucking on his thumb. Seeing her loving on him so intimately, Billy froze while watching the almost familiar sight. It made him think of things from long ago and far away. Another time when he had been in that same comfortable position with someone very close to him. Someone who was no longer in his sordid life.

Billy felt a pang of sadness, a deep mysterious sorrow, he hadn't felt

in a long time. It came out of nowhere and he swallowed it and the memory both down that it had invoked within him. He couldn't deny that her little brother was a sweet kid, despite him not liking children, and he looked very happy.

He almost reminded Billy of his younger more innocent self and he had to look away and harden his heart a little bit. It felt like something he had no right to see as emotions that toiled within him were fluxuating.

"Sure. Follow me." Mandy smiled pleasantly and lead the way to the kitchen even though he already knew where it was. She was already anticipating what he might say to her and was still feeling pretty proud of herself for this one. He stared at her following slowly behind thinking of just how he should approach this.

He could hear her parents having a firm discussion with one another as they sat there waiting for them to return. Walking into the kitchen he watched her grab the items she said she would from the cupboards and he leaned on the kitchen counter that was the center piece of the room.

"A date, huh?" He started with. She was pretending to ignore his frustration as she continued getting the bowls and napkins. Reaching for the butter from the fridge retrieving it silently she then grabbed the salt shaker on the spice rack as he tried again.

"I had hoped we would have been... alone together tonight. Wasn't that the plan? I can't help but feel you roped me into this one and it wasn't very nice of you, princess."

He chose his words carefully not wanting to upset her in front of her family or spoil even what little of a night he could have with her. After going a week without her, barring the dinner, he was sorely content to even have this sliver of hope and the time he had been given.

She turned around smiling at him sweetly not letting his displeasure get to her one bit.

"Whatever do you mean? Billy, if I recall correctly, although you said

date you also said I could pick the time and place of my choosing and you would show up to be there. Remember?"

He shut his mouth and stared at her craftiness in disbelief. She was way more tricky and intelligent than he had originally given her credit for. Somehow she managed to use his own words against him fitting in her little scheme as if it hadn't violated that at all. He nodded slowly trying to stay sweet on her with his voice and his expression.

"You're right. I did. But a date means just two people alone together for a romantic evening does it not?" He countered back grinning playing his usual mental and verbal chess with her.

"Maybe. But a movie night is a movie night regardless of who is present and I consider that a date by the standard definition. And what could be more romantic then spending an evening indoors watching cult classic movies ranging from horror, to comedy, to even... a romance film later on?"

He listened to her going on while he rubbed his face and tried to be patient. It was clearly irritating him but he was trying to be civil with her and not get too worked up. All his hopes smashed he felt helpless but what could he do? He was here. She was right. He would have to deal.

"I picked my favorite for that one. The classic 1968 Romeo and Juliet film since that's what we are studying in English together. I think it will be very beneficial for you." She perked up cornering him again with her own sense of logic and he rolled his eyes covering his face with his hands making her giggle at him as they moved out of the kitchen and back to the living room.

Great. So not only did she trick him into spending time with her entire family, she also found a way to make tonight about homework and their class studies. Fantastic.

Following her back into the living room he took his spot in the single chair and had his bowl of popcorn in his lap while he folded one long leg over his knee. He decided to just roll with the punches and settle himself in getting comfortable. Mandy sat in between her parents

next to Calvin often sneaking glances at him grinning deviously as she ate and drank.

He watched the popcorn as she put it to her lips and noted how lovely and plump her mouth was. He had wanted to put his mouth all over her there and now he felt that just wasn't going to be an option. Inside he was dying as he watched her lick the salt from her lips with her warm soft pink tongue.

Every time she looked at him and he looked back at her, her father noticed and looked at him eyeing him something fierce. It made Billy reglue his eyes back to the television set to watch the movie not wanting to make him angry over staring at his daughter or ruin their night.

Calvin was a chatty child and laughed often at the funny parts of the movie. Her family did too but talked less. Mandy tried to focus on the films but she often found her eyes wandering over to Billy. He looked handsome in the soft glow of the t.v. light and at one point she noticed he actually started getting really into the movies.

She admired his strong chest and his amazing sense of fashion. He somehow knew to pick the best outfits that would showcase his beautiful Adonis like body and it made her mouth go dry the more she noticed. She blamed it on the popcorn of course and began drinking her soda trying to alleviate her cotton mouth desperately.

They went through old gangster films, comedy films relevant to their time like "Police Academy" and "Beverly Hills Cop", to family animated classics like "The Muppets Take Manhattan" and "Frankenweenie" for Calvin.

The more he watched and settled in the more her family, even her father, seemed to warm up to him and get more relaxed. Billy was relaxed too and not as high strung or confused as he was earlier.

When all the popcorn was gone Billy went with her into the kitchen to make a second round for them all and they actually had a decent conversation about the movies with lighthearted joking and laughter. She liked the way he laughed and when he was sincere with his smiles.

When the horror movies were playing, her parents put Calvin to bed much to his near tantrum protests. He always wanted to see the scary monsters and watch what the adults were watching to be a part of it but they never let him. He was still prone to nightmares and bed wetting. Eventually he settled down and went to sleep upstairs, only coming down each time he asked for a glass of water just to keep himself awake and to be with them in the den. They would simply pause the movie until he was put back in bed.

It made Mandy smile and look at Billy in a whole new light when he actually walked Calvin into the kitchen a few times getting the glass of water for him and sending him off to bed. He did this so she and her family wouldn't have to be interrupted constantly. He had smiled at Calvin when talking him into finally staying asleep, even teaching him how to knuckle bump fists with him and making her little brother smile.

Her heart fluttered at the sight before her. He was actually surprisingly good with kids despite him putting on a show of his dislike of them at the pool. This was his private side. His soft side he never showed in public. She felt privileged to see it. Why was it so hard for him to be like this all the time? It hurt her heart that he didn't show this part of himself more often.

"Calvin seems to really like you." Mandy said while taking a bite of her popcorn. Her parents looked tired and yet mildly disturbed by the horror flicks. Billy looked at her and nodded slowly but stone faced not wanting to admit he may just have a soft spot for the six year old.

"Yeah. He's a pretty cool kid himself. Mouthy. He reminds me of someone I know..." He said grinning devilishly at her as she threw some popcorn at him then moving his gorgeous eyes back to the teen slasher flick that Mandy had picked out. He had to admit, she had good taste in horror cinema.

Eventually, her father was yawning and stretching ready for bed himself. This wasn't a movie night. This was a movie marathon or extravaganza. It would seem he had his fill of it.

He looked between the two of them nervously not really wanting to retire for the night and leave them alone in the living room together.



But after Katherine talked him into it saying they would be fine and were not really alone, he agreed and said goodnight to Mandy while gruffly ignoring Billy so as to keep his cool. He kissed her cheek softly while looking at the dangerously good looking boy and Mandy smiled returning the sentiment to both her parents.

Katherine gave her a hug and told her if they needed anything they would be right upstairs sleeping. Her father reiterated this with a stern tone while looking at Billy. He swallowed hard almost choking on some of his popcorn not missing the point. It was a clear message that he was to keep his hands off his daughter and if he caught him doing it he would kill him.

Billy locked eyes with him nodding seriously. As badly as he wanted to touch Mandy he would have to be a gentleman and be very careful not to cross any boundaries in an overly sensual way. Cuddling wasn't an offense was it? How about slight nuzzling? Holding hands? Putting his arm around her? He hadn't really done such vanilla tame stuff with a girl in a long time since he was a nervous preteen on his first date. But if he wanted to get close to her while surviving her father, he supposed he would have to.

"Goodnight, mom. Goodnight, dad." Mandy caught her father's look.

"Daddy, I'll be fine. Get some sleep. We're just going to watch one more movie and then Billy will go home. Right, Billy?"

She said grinning from ear to ear thoroughly enjoying his torment of having not been able to touch her or get close to her all night. Now would be his chance but should she shoot him down or should she allow him to close in on her a bit and then pull away to further cement her teasing of him? He sort of deserved it for all the times he made her feel so anxious around him and teased her right back.

"Absolutely. Yes, sir. Just one flick and I'll be turning in for the night." He complied with an honest looking face to her father who grunted deeply and made his way up the steps with his wife as she laughed at his overbearing protective nature.

Katherine whispered they would be just fine to her father as they left the room to go to bed. Mandy's mother knew she wasn't stupid and

could handle herself when it came to boys and life decisions. She could definitely handle Billy. Right?

"Alright. So, let me just change out the tape here and then you can finally see the story come to life on the big screen." Mandy exclaimed cheerfully.

Billy sighed slightly rolling his beautiful blue eyes but he smiled at her definitely watching as she bent over a bit in front of him while searching the entertainment shelf to switch the tapes out on the VHS player. It took all his restraint not to want to reach out and grab a handful of that cute round butt of hers and he slapped his own hand over it playfully without her noticing. He felt himself getting a bit tight in his jeans as he shifted on the couch while staring.

When she finished and popped the right tape in she came over to stand near him grabbing the remote off of the living room table and pressed play to start the movie.

Billy looked up at her patting the couch cushion gently next to himself feeling a little more brave now that her parents weren't in the room. She looked down at him warily as if deciding if she wanted to sit there or not.

"Come join me?" He said looking up at her with a sly slow smirk forming.

"Will you behave?" She said back to him almost grinning too but trying to look serious.

"I'll... do my best?" It was a semi decent compromise. As long as he didn't go under her clothes or put his roaming hands in places she didn't like, she supposed she could snuggle up to him on the couch during the film. There was no harm in that.

She nodded slowly and he could see the shy tension in her eyes as she sat down and made herself comfortable once more. He put his arm around her shoulder in one slick move and rested his hand lightly on the side of her arm. He was gently stroking the skin of her soft lean bicep below the cut shoulder of her top with his fingers while looking at the television and the opening credits.

Mandy's heart was beginning to leap and pound faster in her chest as she breathed in his smell fully enveloping her. He smelled so good she couldn't deny he had great taste in cologne and aftershave.

"Rabbit?" Billy said trying to talk to her addressing her with that ridiculous nickname. She humored it anyway and had no idea why.

"Yes?" Was all she said as she tried to focus on her popcorn and the movie and less on him, his powerful warm arm around her and his face so close to hers while she slightly laid her head on the side of his chest. She was nestled in the crook of his arm quite comfortably.

"Thank you." Was all he said. Just a simple two word sentence that held volumes of meaning and emotion in them.

"For what?" She looked up at him and turning his head to looking down at her and he just stared at her for a few minutes enjoying the feel of her against him. He looked into her emerald eyes and sighed down softly to her.

"For this." Mandy wasn't sure if he meant inviting him over for the movies or for actually being willing to allow him to hold her close.

"You're... you're welcome." She smiled up at him and a very strong emotion seemed to flicker in his gorgeous baby blue's as he looked at her soft fair face.

For a moment he began to lean his head down closer moving his lips almost to hers and at the last moment before their lips connected she dodged the kiss and turned her head to the side. He got her cheek instead and the stroking of her arm got more and more teasing as he nuzzled down into her neck and hair. She felt him breathe in her scent and she nervously munched on her popcorn. She had to stop eating when he began kissing her there. She let out a soft moan accidentally. He grinned against her warm skin as his lips grazed along her soft throat slowly.

As soon as they heard her father clear his own throat coming into the kitchen for something they both jumped and were eyes forward to the screen as if they hadn't just been necking in the dark.

Once her dad was done getting whatever it was he came to get as an excuse to spy on them and went back upstairs they both let out a slow sigh of relief.

Talking about the movie as they watched it Mandy went into the deeper subjects and themes of the characters and Billy actually nodded listening.

Once it was over with them only being interrupted a few times by her hovering father, her mother shouting at him to get his rear end back upstairs and in bed, they were laughing each time her mother commandeered him to let them be.

Turning off the television Mandy smiled and stretched then got up from cuddling with Billy. He almost looked sad to see her separate from him and they both walked nervously to her front door to go outside.

"I... I had a great time tonight. So, thank you, Billy." Mandy said smiling softly up at him and blushing as they stood saying goodbye for the evening.

"Me too, rabbit. Me too. But I still want to take you on a REAL date. Just you and I. That is, if you will have me..." He trailed off and she suddenly felt brave looking into his soft and gorgeous face taking in all of his features as he stood slightly looming over her.

Leaning in she softly kissed his cheek smelling his pleasantly scented aftershave and then moved her lips slowly and softly his neck for one little peck with her lips. He closed his eyes freezing very still with his hands in his pockets. He was dangerously tempted to turn her face to him by gently grabbing her chin to seal the night with a soft kiss but he decided not to and to let her do what she wanted at her own pace. He tried not to make any noises that would give him away but his breath did hitch slightly only once before she stopped and pulled away.

"Maybe. If you keep being nice to me I might consider it." Her playful smile and bright dancing green eyes made him stare at her for a minute.

*What am I doing? This is so not good. I'm going to wind up leading him on. I should stop this now... before... we...*

Mandy flushed when he turned his blue eyes to her longingly and he placed his hand underneath her soft chin. He tilted her head up to him and moved a bit closer, licking his lips slowly and wetting them for her. He was so close his breath was fanning her lips and was mingling with her own.

"I really want to kiss you, Mandy. May I?" His voice was deep, carnal, but still soft and sweet. She felt her knees go weak and everything spin slowly. He was so close he could take it. But would he? Or would he wait for her to answer?

They stayed like that for a moment just breathing each other in and feeling their breath mingling together. In one instant she knew she wanted him to. She slowly nodded and he smiled going the rest of the way in.

When his warm soft lips met hers she instantly melted into him when he put his arms around her and pressed them on the small of her back. His firm chest pressed against her soft one. Their body heat rising between them as they stood there. He kissed her softly moving his lips over hers with a gentle need she could both feel and understand. Her lower lip trembled slightly as he took her mouth with his barely parting her lips with his tongue but doing no more than that. Her stomach was on fire for him as he kissed her slow and senseless in the warm night air.

It was Mandy's first kiss. Billy most likely had no idea despite how nervous she was. Her first kiss ever in her entire life with anyone. And she had just given it to Billy Hargrove, of all people.

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That night Mandy had went to bed full of questions. Questions she couldn't give answers to for herself no matter how hard she tried. Running her fingers over the place where Billy had kissed her she kept feeling it. It had been a strange sensation that took her completely by surprise and it wasn't letting up anytime soon. Her mouth felt like his was still there, gently carressing her own and

tasting her, teasing her, with the tip of his warm tongue.

She sighed and closed her eyes enjoying the afterglow that still stayed with her. He was so amazing at it. If he was that good of a kisser, better than all the other boys, she wouldn't truly know since she had nothing else to compare it to. So she settled to believe he was simply more experienced and imagined him to be the best kisser of the entire school. With his track record of all the girls he must have been with, it wouldn't be too farfetched of an assumption.

*His eyes. They were full of something I've never before seen when he leaned in to me. He had waited. He had been patient. He had asked for the kiss. Why?*

She pondered on this and found herself smiling in the dark of her room as she lay in bed trying to get to sleep. His eyes had looked so gently into hers and he wasn't being forceful with her like he usually tried to be at school. This was all new to her and it sort of frightened her. If he could get her to kiss him without having any inhibitions to stop it then what else would he be able to tempt her into? She found herself losing all her self control around him and it terrified her.

*It can't happen again. It wouldn't last long anyway. He will just find some other girl after he tires of me. I wasn't his first nor would I be his last ever in his lifetime. Tucker had more right to my first kiss than Billy ever did so why did I allow him to be the one to have it tonight after holding out for someone special all these years? I'm so stupid.*

Her heart hurt deeply at this realization. She almost felt a stab of guilt for giving away so freely the one thing her best friend Tucker had wanted when he tried to kiss her in her room that night and then carelessly handing it over on a silver platter to Billy after one night of him showing her he could be soft and tender. Right after telling Tucker she wanted nothing to do with him or Hargrove she violated her own decision by allowing Billy to get too close to her and being fooled by his good boy act.

It was clear Billy was more in control of things than she was and she was stupid to believe she would make all the decisions. She couldn't help herself when around him. This thing between them was getting far beyond her normal comfort zone and she wanted to go back to

ignoring him again.

She knew that ignoring Billy not letting him get any closer to her would definitely hurt and confuse him after what they shared tonight. Honestly she felt maybe it would be better that way. She would only wind up hurt in the end if he switched back to Tina or finding other girls to date and fool around with leaving her in the cold once he had his fun with her. She refused to be an option to him not expecting to ever be a priority.

Finally managing to calm herself down enough and accept what had happened, she rolled over and went to bed hoping for a dreamless sleep that didn't involve Billy haunting her subconscious as she slept. Mandy would never admit it or tell anyone but she had been having some rather deeply personal dreams about him and she just wanted them to stop.

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Billy lay awake in his room with his headphones in and music playing on his walkman. He was listening to his favorite mix tape that he made a long time ago for his cruising around California when his Camaro was brand new and just bought for him.

The sports car had been a sweet sixteen present to him from his mother, wherever she was at the time of setting it up, who apparently wanted her son to have a vehicle and not be trapped anywhere without transportation as he got older. Most likely she wanted him to be able to escape Neil and what she knew he did to him while also enabling him to see the world if he had so decided to.

Maybe even a part of her hoped he would use it to find her and come see her one day. He never did. He opted to forget about her and try to erase her along with all his memories of her from his mind. The car became a symbol of his freedom but even then he was as chained down to Neil's tight control and abuse regardless of having it.

Billy had been hesitant to accept the gift originally because of his bitterness towards her for leaving him all alone with his hateful demonic father. Many nights he had cried over that fateful day. The telephone call shattering his world that his mother was never coming

home and was moving on without him leaving him behind. His whole life he lived both fearing and expecting anyone and everyone to abandon him eventually just like she did. He never bothered to get close to anyone nor would he open up and share his grief and his past.

The funds were passed on successfully to him through his father and while Neil could have taken the money for himself for his new life with his wife and step daughter, he had actually done the right thing and helped Billy pick out the Camaro RS from the lot. He had paid for it in full allowing them to take it from the dealership bringing it home at first with the title and deed in Neil's name.

Despite all the crap he put his son through he had actually taken the time to teach him how to drive it. Neil had helped him pass his California driver's test and get his learner's permit. He had spent hours and weeks driving with his old man as a licensed driver until he was able to get his own license and drive on his own. When that happened the car's title and deed passed to Billy putting it in his own name making it official.

Once that was accomplished he allowed him to have his outings with the car so he could focus more on Susan and Max and his brand new shiny life with them and not so much with Billy, his own flesh and blood, unless it was to hit him or degrade him and use the car to control him even more.

Billy could only guess the beatings got worse because now his mother was gone and Neil's son was a constant reminder of her and that failed former life so long ago. Neil's son looked more like his mother than his father so to look at Billy growing up was to look into the eyes and face of his ex wife, whom he once loved, that he had also abused and drove away. It was a face he would never be able to forget so long as Billy lived and breathed under his roof.

The constant physical punishment from his father and how Neil favored his new wife and step daughter over his own child of course made him act out even more over time as the years went by cementing in the damage and rage. Acting out in school and when going to parties with his new gained equally wreckless bad seed friends.



Of course, his old man didn't let him go out and do whatever he wanted whenever, nor did he allow him to get into that car without setting rules before hand. The more Neil's abuse picked up with him even in front of Susan and an even younger Max the less Billy obeyed his father's rules and became more and more wild and careless with the car.

At one point he didn't care if he crashed it or even died in a wreck because all he thought of was his earth shattering hatred for both of his parents. Greif made way for anger and anger for emptiness until he made himself cold inside to everyone, even those he considered a friend. Slowly over time the pain and hatred he felt for Neil from the beginning began to bleed into his feelings for his own mother, the one thing he loved more than anything in this world, and that is when he started bullying kids at his old high school and making shady connections with other kids as messed up as he was.

It's also when he started the illegal drag racing and pitting his mother's gift against other people's cars. The high from it at one point was the only thing he could feel as adrenaline coursed through him setting fire to his veins. It gave him a rush and made him feel powerful, helping to block out all the agony and misery of his troubled home life.

It had been fun and a great way to blow off steam. Until getting caught during a race over a girl with her jealous boyfriend by the Santa Monica Police Department and spending the night in jail until his livid father came to pick him up. It had finally been his undoing and the end of his stability of being able to stay on the West Coast. It had forced Neil's hand to relocate them to Hawkins, Indiana far to the East where his son could not accrue much of a criminal record with more laid back policeman living in a town where barely anything happened to anyone.

Neil had claimed they needed a change and to start over anyway with their new family but he knew it had been done to further control his son's random and unpredictable wild acts of self destruction. To reign him in even more in a place where he could not thrive or have much space to run free or get into more trouble. In a boring sleepy town with not much to do full of dead ends Neil knew he would party but would be forced to play ball or else risk going

before a judge to do hard time.

Listening to the tape always brought back the sordid mixture of memories about all of his past, the history of how he got to where he was now, and the gift she gave him despite him loving his music. It was a double edged sword. On one hand it soothed his savage soul and on the other it brought on long forgotten emotions he did not want to remember at any cost. As did the Camaro each time he climbed into the driver's seat or looked at it parked motionless begging him to race it into oblivion. How many times had he planned on crashing it just to try and take himself out with it from his miserable empty existence, he lost count.

But there it stayed. Always ready to ride. And no gift in the world could absolve his mother of the heartache and broken sense of being she caused in him the day she walked out of his life forever. She was weak just as Neil had said she was and like hell would he follow in her footsteps. Doing what she did brought on more pain and suffering than Neil had ever dealt to him with his fists over the years and would never be topped by anything else he would ever feel from that moment onward.

The car funds were not so much a present as a guilty attempt to reconcile for leaving him all alone in his damaged world with her no longer able to fight for him and protect him. The first of very little few presents she gave him over the years as they grew further and further apart emotionally on top of physically.

The last gift being the Catholic necklace, a Saint said to watch over travelers, that he constantly wore about his neck. Sometimes to remember her while wearing it made it feel as if it were burning a hole into his chest and melting his heart like wax.

Stuck with two reminders of her constantly with him forever despite how he hardened his will steeling it against daring any thoughts or feelings of her, he kept them as a reminder to never love or trust anyone ever again with his heart, soul, or his body.

At first he kept them out of love, now he acknowledges he keeps them out of spite. She was as dead to him as he was to himself and everyone else, although he still kept them secretly and painfully half

cherishing them as much as he did the small photo album she mailed to him that sat in an old shoe box buried in his closet for years. After the move it rested buried in his new closet never to see the light of day.

He often thought of burning all of the pictures away so he would never have to be tempted to see her face as long as he lived. It pained him to look at the photographs of the two of them together laughing and smiling, so he stopped opening it up. He hid it away as if it were a dirty secret knowing that to look at her was to remember and to remember was to open up his wounds for further hemorrhaging.

Shifting himself back into his emotionless void he no longer wanted to feel his heart begin to race and ache, his blood pressure to rise, and the discomfort of these feelings resurfacing more than he could bear. Instead he concentrated on the music without the painful memories attached to it and let it all burn away.

Song after song and soon he was back to being numb again. Listening to a little bit of Motley Crue, Metallica, Ratt, and Scorpions and other rock legends he enjoyed over the years when learning his taste in music. Normally he liked fast hardcore thrashing metal but the classics were good too although slower and with less screaming and angst than he cared for.

He was pleasantly surprised and shocked when Great White's "Save All Your Love" suddenly came on. He didn't remember putting that song on the track list but apparently he did because here it was playing in his ears and making him think of only one person that had been on his mind a lot lately. As he laid there listening to it he felt every word of the lyrics deep inside of himself and it brought about the stirrings of something he never knew he could feel. Need. A sort of sadness longing to be free of it.

For a moment he had half a mind to change it and go to the next one but his finger stayed on the skip button in hesitation and he let it play out. Every song he listened to somehow found a way to remind him of Mandy but this one especially got to him. He felt the sting of tears welling up in the corner of his eyes as he recalled a trip to the beach long ago with someone who had long flowing blonde hair and a light gentle laugh. It also made him think of clear green sparkling

eyes and a tenderness long forgotten. He could almost hear a lighter more melodic female voice singing the words but the crashing over waves overtook it and drowned it out.

Normally he wouldn't listen to such sappy love songs even if they were rock songs, but he found himself closing his eyes to this one and just feeling the music as each note struck a chord within him and he felt every word Jack Russell belted out. It almost pained him with how bittersweet they were to his ears while laying still in the dark. He swallowed the oncoming tears and felt a lump in his throat. He let his emptiness drive it away and changed his thoughts to something else to help him forget the fading memory.

Instead he focused on Mandy's face and how she looked tonight. Remembering his kiss with her outside with the crickets and cicadas seranading them both he sighed and recalled how it felt to put his mouth to hers. He remembered how his tongue had traced and memorized the shape of her lips barely parting them to her inner sweetness to go further. He could almost taste the salt of the popcorn mixed with the sweetness of her lipgloss and ran his tongue over his lips on instinct while fondly recalling every second of how he kissed her.

She had been so warm and tender in his arms and pressed against his searching mouth. He loved the way she felt in his arms and it made him frown to recall the sudden sense of withdrawl and loss he felt when she was no longer in them. It was almost painful parting with her having to walk across the street back to where he couldn't touch her or breathe her in.

This was getting deeper than he had ever intended it to. It was getting to the point where he couldn't imagine himself not being around her or being able to touch her. Seriously questioning how his motives to simply sleep with her had somehow morphed into a slight infatuation with her, he grumbled a bit and groaned in his bed. He should have known things were approaching dangerous territory when she began invoking within him emotions long since surpressed and buried.

Emotions and feeling as if he belonged, being close to someone, and caring about someone in his life. Feelings of when he often caught

himself thinking of her like this alone in the dark of his room. He recalled her fair face and her brilliant green eyes as they had sparkled for him playfully. Her eyes had shown him everything he needed to know when he closed in on her for that first kiss with her.

It felt different than any other kiss he had ever before shared with anyone. It had been gentle. Patient. Soft and inviting. Not hungry or carnal as all the others have been in his lifetime. It shocked him that he didn't just take it from her, as he was want to do with other girls, but rather that he asked for it first. A move that just wasn't like him at all. When had he ever asked for anything from a girl that he couldn't just talk his way into them giving it up or would simply go for it already feeling he owned and deserved it?

But Mandy had said yes. She had given him permission. And despite how slow and easy she went with it, almost as if afraid of him yet while sharing that intimacy, she had wanted it as bad as he did and closed her eyes while doing it. He watched her for a few seconds into the kiss and how she responded to him.

He caught the trembling of her lips shy and uncertain against his skilled ones full of intent and passion as his mouth overtook hers but he held back. He didn't kiss her like he had all the other girls because he could feel from her this was her first time. Her first kiss. He somehow knew because of how nervous she was when his lips locked with hers. So, keeping his tongue on a short leash he only just barely allowed it to explore not really seeking entrance into her mouth the first time.

Deep inside of himself he felt things waking up. He felt the numbness wearing off. All of his internal layers that matched Mandy's outer ones were slowly being stripped away day by day the more time he spent with her and wanting her. This would not end well. Perhaps he should push her away and stop this before it went too far.

Before he fell asleep the last thing he saw was her bright green beautiful eyes and for a moment he heard his mother's voice whispering something to him he had not heard from many years ago. Three little barely audible words inside the back of his mind and he shook them off rolling over to let sleep claim him while enveloped in the darkness and attempting to be numb once more. He had to stop

letting Mandy control his thoughts and awaken his heart to something he knew could never be.

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## **9. Ahoy Ladies! - The Startcourt Experience**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

### **Chapter 9 - AHOY, LADIES! - THE STARCOURT EXPERIENCE**

#### **Summary:**

Nikki finally gets Mandy to go shopping with her like they used to. Mandy missed out on Summer back to school shopping with Nikki so she feels obligated to make it up to her. Nikki takes her for her first time to Startcourt Mall. They go shopping for clothes as Nikki pressures her to get outfits for parties she might want to take her to.

While there they visit Steve at his new job and also have some fun talking with Robin his new co-worker and friend.

Billy gets woken up by Susan asking him to take Max to meet her new friends at the Startcourt Mall. Much to his distaste in driving her around he is forced into it knowing Neil will be pissed if he doesn't.

Max mouths off to Billy angry at him disrespecting her new

friends by taunting him stating him he let some very private things slip to his step sister about the neighbor girl and how he feels about her. She informs him he accidentally did this through a means that was beyond his control but uses it anyway to upset him.

Realizing if all of this got out, especially to Mandy, it would make it harder for him to play his favorite game with her or get to last base. He has to make her keep her silence somehow, but chooses poorly in how he does it, although it was very effective.

Once that issue is solved he wants to go into the mall and harass Steve for a little bit and then maybe hang out with Tommy and Carol before the party.

Instead he runs into Mandy and Nikki and begins asking Mandy why she wouldn't answer his calls and is seemingly avoiding and ignoring him on purpose. She blows up at him and refuses to spend more time with him until he can change his ways and apologize. He refuses and she storms off. Max overhears this and puts the pieces together that Billy really likes Mandy. As like, more than just a girl to sleep with. She meets up with her friends, The Party, and meets El for the first time. They are going to the arcade. :P

NOTE: Another big chapter with a lot going on. Sorry about that. Credit Card shennanigans! Weeee! I don't know how they work or how they did in the 80's. Sorry. Just go with it. \*shrugs\*

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The Starcourt Mall was packed today and out of control. After an hour on the phone with Nikki she finally wore her down convincing her to do a little bit of clothes shopping before Steve's big party. Nikki swung by her house at noon giving her enough time to have breakfast and alert her parents that their stranger of a daughter would be having an outing with her friend today much to their surprise and happiness.

When they arrived Nikki parked as close as she could to the front and got angry when some inconsiderate driver cut her off in the lot to



take the spot she originally wanted.

"Can you believe this? People go to the mall on the weekend and suddenly forget how to drive?"

She honked her horn a few times at him while sticking her tongue out of the corner of her mouth glaring and he basically waved her off with his middle finger. Huffing in anger she passed him finding another spot eventually to park.

"Jerk. I'd like to know what Cracker Jack box he got his prize of a license from and how long he had to dig for it. Honestly, who is working at the local Hawkins DMV passing out licenses like candy to people like this? "

Mandy laughed at her friend's angry joke made at the rude driver's expense and shook her head.

"They approved you, didn't they?" She shot playfully at Nikki earning her making a face at her in response but she knew it was true. Nikki could be just as much of a diva on the streets herself.

"Touche. Even on my good days I drive like I own the whole road. I'm so full of myself I think I should change my name to Noel so every Christmas I can see my own name in lights."

They both laughed at this figuring it was a very 'Nikki' thing to do and stepped out of her car. Locking it up and making their way to approach the front entrance to the massive two story shopping center they walked arm in arm pointing to the building excitedly.

For once Mandy was happy to have a distraction and some space to help keep her away from Billy, which also helped remove all anchored thoughts of him as well. It was much needed to help her get some time to breathe freely unlike whenever he was around her. Although she gave him her number last night before he left, she would not be there to answer if he called, and resolved not to be at the door if he came knocking. It was cruel but she needed time away from him to clear her thoughts and what better way to do that then to go shopping with Nikki and explore the new mall?

"Just wait until you get a load of this place, Mandy, you are just going to die!" Nikki said interrupting her thoughts with a big grin on her face super stoked to have finally talked her into coming to Starcourt with her.

Mandy had never before set foot in it until now despite how hard Nikki had tried to get her to come along with her whenever she went on her shopping sprees with her mother's credit cards. How Nikki got away with it she had no idea but she managed.

Once inside Mandy truly was in awe of how well they had built it and mapped out the place. The layout was impressive. The shopping mall was technically still new and had just opened a week or two before school started. It gave the entire town a chance to shop for the new school year barely broken in by the public so it smelled very clean and shined beautifully.

The top floor ledges were lined with sturdy thick safety railing and the first floor was connected to the second utilizing two glass door elevators and a total of at least four escalators with each set on the opposite side of the building. The center of the first floor had lush green plants almost tropical in design surrounding a medium sized fountain pool that had wooden benches nearby all around for seating. The sounds of the fountain were relaxing for any shopper to sit by as they took a break since the mall was so big it would definitely be needed.

It had taken them a total of two years to build it even though most locals protested it out of fear of its construction putting the mom and pop stores out of business. Mayor Kline was getting a lot of heat for it but ignoring them all the same. They had been picketing his office for months ever since learning of the plan to build Starcourt and seeing the project unfolding but he tried to quell them by stating it would create a massive amount of job openings for people and would be good for the economy of the small town.

The mall upon it's completion was now filled with at least forty or more stores including the food court locations below in the main central hub. There was a small six screen cinema still under construction and plenty of furniture, clothing, and shoe stores such as a JCPenney's, Claire's, and The Gap. One of the clothing stores put in

last was most notable and controversial for it's time, Lovelace, a racy Lingerie store that Nikki tried way too hard to drag Mandy into. There were many others to choose from as well and Nikki wanted to hit ALL of them.

It was wild how many hair and nail salons were present. There were numerous book stores galore which definitely caught Mandy's interest, much to Nikki's disappointment, who tried to keep her out of them but in vain. In addition to all of this there were plenty of new brand name shops to buy trinkets and memorabilia from. They even had a Spencer's Gifts, Radio Shack, and so much more. If it existed it was practically here.

As far as food options it had an Orange Julius, Hot Dog On a Stick, Burger King, Taco Bell, and some sort of new pizza place. Vending machines were everywhere strategically placed to get a thirsty shopper's attention. The number one food court spot, however, was Scoops Ahoy! It was a brand spankin' new nautical themed ice cream parlor with a lot of tasty mix and match flavors and delicious frozen treats and it was fast becoming extremely popular.

Nikki had told Mandy that Harrington was now working weekends there but on the early shift still giving him plenty of time in the evenings to hangout and party with his friends. When she told Mandy about his getup he was forced to wear for the job, and the fun little co worker he had semi bonded with, Mandy simply had to see it for herself and it was partially the reason she decided to come with.

Nikki had at least six different bags by the time she agreed to rest. Three in one hand and three more slung over her shoulder. She was ever the picture of bliss and energy even when lugging the weight of her purchases along while she excitedly jabbered away to Mandy who carried far less. Her bookbag now proudly held three new novels for her to enjoy all selected thoughtfully on her behalf.

In all the clothing stores they visited, all she got was one cute black two piece dress for the party that had an off the shoulder top and a lazy bottom skirt, some black thigh highs to match it, and a pair of dress shoes. She had tried it on and picked it behind Nikki's back as her friend was occupied looking at the clothing racks seeking outfits for Mandy. She paid for it quickly afraid of her friends shopping

criticism that would make them take hours to find something more along the lines of her fashion crazy friend's tastes about what she thought Mandy should wear. Nikki wasn't really trying to control everything she just wanted her to look her very best. She couldn't deny that Nikki knew her stuff when it came to outfits and accessorizing. Especially with makeup and hairstyles that were all the rage in today's pop teen culture.

Going from store to store for a few hours Mandy was getting a bit exhausted so she pleaded with Nikki for a break and to get something to eat. Eventually, her friend gave in and slowed their roll to make a pit stop at the food court. They decided to make use of their rest break to pay Steve a visit at Scoops to not only get ice cream but get a load of his sailor outfit. Mandy could already envision the embarrassed look on his face he would get once they dropped by.

On the way there Nikki gushed to her about a random good looking older guy she saw in one of the stores they were in.

"Mandy, I swear, that guy we saw in Sears looked just like John Cusack only a little bit older. He was so dreamy! I almost wanted to ask him for his autograph just to make conversation with him and get his number."

She laughed a light titter while Mandy smirked at her not quite agreeing to the statement of his looks. As for his age she was quite accurate. He was older. Way older.

"Nikki, he looked more like a little thing called 'way too old for you'. You're in high school. Remember?"

Mandy shot at her friend teasingly. She knew Nikki liked high school boys but every now and then she had a severe attraction to older men and it sometimes worried her. Last year her obsession, she corrected her often - her 'crush', over a substitute teacher was quite dire. She pined for him for weeks blabbing Mandy's ear off over how cute he was and being brave enough to dare flirting lightly with him in class.

If high school boys weren't bad enough, older men could be even more treacherous. Mandy knew the score and wasn't as naive as Nikki was in this area. It was well known that they sometimes cheated on

their wives and chased younger girls breaking hearts as much as the teenage boys did if not more, almost rivaling Billy in that department.

"Only for another couple of months! Then I'm turning eighteen so it wouldn't matter, right? He wouldn't have to know that. I can dress very adult for my age and with the right makeup all bets are off. He would be eating out of the palm of my hand, girl! Trust me on this!"

Nikki said playfully and nudging Mandy while sticking her tongue out between her teeth then puckering her mouth. She was attempting to make smoldering eyes batting her eyelashes and doing her best to look like a sultry older woman while pouting her lips out.

"He could be married. He could have a wife." Mandy retorted giving her friend crap over it just for kicks. Nikki froze in her pout face then sighed rolling her eyes at Mandy's unwillingness to go along with it or laugh at her joke.

"I didn't see no ring on that finger." Nikki said grinning deviously. Mandy sighed and smirked at her friend always finding a way to rationalize things away to her advantage. She had the sharpest eye for attention to detail out of everyone she knew.

Mandy rolled her own sea green eyes looking up at the ceiling of the mall habitually while Nikki was still talking about the cute gentleman as they finally made it to the escalator. Somehow Nikki managed to not hit anyone with her large packed shopping bags in the process as she swung them lightly out of pure joy of spending time with Mandy. She was still talking her ear off as they were going down the escalator to the bottom floor to head to Scoops Ahoy!

The hustle and bustle of all the people shopping for things they needed or wanted surrounded Nikki and Mandy as they made their way from fast food booths enjoying the soft glow of the neon signs and lights. They gave a colorful atmosphere to the ground floor and foodcourt area. Families everywhere were jamming up the lines eager to get snacks and drinks taking breaks at the booths and tables to rest their weary legs.

They cheerfully walked over to the Scoops ice cream parlor and Nikki

appeared to be rehearsing in her mind just what she would say to tease Steve once he came out in his outfit. When they approached the main counter inside, located beyond all the tables and chairs, Mandy saw a lithe girl with sandy brown almost dirty blonde hair with streaks in it that was cut short to the base of her neck. Her face was fair and thin with a light peppering of freckles across it and she was dressed in the iconic required work attire.

Her ears were pierced and she wore a lot of black jewelry on her fingers and wrists. Mandy guessed her to be a bit punk rock when out of the usual work clothes and could see her dressing like a skater chick for some odd reason. She was almost tomboyish despite the feminine outfit she appeared to hate wearing.

It was a blue and white striped feminine sailor outfit. The top was striped while the bottom that looked like a mix of a skirt and pair of shorts was solid blue with white stripes on the bottom and lining the pockets. She wore a blue vest layered over the striped top. On the vest was the picture of an icecream cone and the entire top was fitted with a collar that ended in a red bowtie. Pinned to her vest was a red plastic namebadge that had a little white anchor symbol on it next to her name.

The seaworthy ensemble was complete with a white sailor hat that read 'Ahoy' in fancy navy blue lettering. Based on this Mandy could only imagine what Steve's outfit would look like only most likely a more male version of it without the blue knee length skirt.

The girl named Robin, according to her work badge, was leaning over the counter with her face in the palm of her hand looking extremely bored. She was listlessly staring off in front of her at no one and nothing in particular, most likely counting down the hours to the end of her shift.

Behind her mounted above her head was a beige and brown sign with all the flavors and prices they offered. Mandy noticed the flavor of the month was Salted Caramel and she scrunched her nose up at that, not really one of her favorites by any means.

Nikki walked up and waited for her to say something but seeing she was in outer space she opted for ringing the service bell a few times

to get her attention. On the third or fourth ring the freckle faced girl turned to her slowly, her head still rested on her chin, and looked at her sarcastically.

"I'm not deaf, I'm just ignoring you." She didn't look in Nikki's direction and kept staring out towards the benches and fountain. Nikki ramped up her use of the bell in response while grinning. Finally, Robin turned to face her with an angsty expression.

"Thank you for checking that the bell isn't broken, Nikki. If not for you, I guess we would never get any business here without knowing for sure that it was in proper working condition."

She had said it as if she were irritated with her but there was a hint of familiarity in her tone laced with her irritable response. Nikki beamed up at her tapping the bell rapidly a few more times for good measure and Robin glared at her for a moment as a slow smile began to spread on her face. She came around the corner of the counter pulling her into a big hug.

"Ahoy, there sailor girl!" Nikki said to her making Robin roll her eyes at the cliché greeting letting go of their embrace.

"How are you sweetie!? Oh my gosh, I haven't seen you since... twenty four hours ago! Still getting hit on in that sexy little number of yours daily? Hmm?" She said to Robin looking over her sailor suit and giving her a friendly wink.

Laughing softly Robin nodded doing a mock curtsy and then gagging herself with her finger. It was obvious she too hated the required outfit. She walked back behind the counter and leaned on it grinning at Nikki giving a short sigh.

Mandy saw their exchange and smiled at the two of them as the girl laughed heartily with her best friend. She had a somewhat breathy gentle laugh that matched her low relaxed voice but it was still a feminine voice all the same. Her deep blue eyes were lighting up and her smile was wide and humorous with her feintly applied dark reddish pink lipstick that really accented the whiteness of her teeth.

They seemed to be closely acquainted with one another, which really

was no surprise, seeing as how Nikki practically didn't go a day without stopping by Starcourt whether shopping or for other reasons. Her friend also had a great winning personality that was easy for anyone to fall in love with and she just about knew everyone in Hawkins High. So knowing Robin shouldn't shock her at all.

"Yeah, except no one of my preferred taste as you know, Nikki. My flavor is a very specific one and seemingly hard to find in Hawkins. But on the upside, I get a decent amount of tip action around here. Unlike Steve, I don't suck." She pointed to a dry erase board behind her which seemed to show a tally of all the times Steve either sucked or didn't suck and there were more marks on the negative side than the positive one.

"And... I don't need hair care products or good looks to think outside the box."

She then pointed to the round plastic tip jar next to the sprinkles container that had a sign on it that read "Pirate ship fund." They looked at it then to each other as if mildly impressed. When returning their gaze to Robin sitting a giggle she pointed to herself to claim credit for the fun little sign.

"But... you're a sailor. Not a pirate." Nikki laughed pointing it out as Robin shrugged.

"Close enough. Different time period but all still ocean and sailing related. Besides, people LOVE pirates a lot more than they do sailors." She gave a smug grin at making her point and neither Nikki nor Mandy could argue with that.

"Well, then for Halloween, if you two are working here that day, you two should totally dress up as pirates! That would be so awesome!" Nikki exclaimed excitedly but Robin shook her head after thinking about it.

"Nope, I'm afraid my boss won't let me ditch my sailor suit when on the clock. I'm apparently one of "Captain Petey's" seafaring crew now and he runs a tight ship around here taking his role as Captain of Scoops rather seriously. There are rules. Life hates me by enforcing them."



Robin sighed and rung herself up a milkshake at the register paying for it out of her tips and was preparing it as she continued lamenting her existence.

"I really just should have taken the job at Lovelace next door. Even that would be less humiliating than this. At least there they wouldn't make me dress up in a corny costume just to work there."

Robin took a small sip of her vanilla milkshake with whipped cream and a few cherries and set it down before she leaned on the parlor counter once more with her elbows. Putting her face in her hands covering it she groaned softly at her life choices.

Both Nikki and Mandy couldn't help but break out in soft fresh giggles over this trying so hard not to upset Robin any more than she clearly already was. Peeking out from between her fingers at them she raised up again and she just stood there taking it patiently while waiting for them to recover with a dry look on her face.

"Haha. Yes. It's hilarious. Save that for Steve, though. He looks even more ridiculous than I do." Her sarcasm was flat at first with a mildly irritated expression so they both stopped and gave apologetic looks to her. She eventually waved it off laughing at her own self and with them giving in to the hilarity of the situation.

"So what can I get you? Just a heads up, don't ask for the cookie dough. Steve's been pinching it with his scooper when he thinks I'm not looking. That guy is worse than a room mate who drinks from your milk carton."

Mandy and Nikki looked grossed out a bit while smirking to one another but then Mandy laughed picturing that in her head fully able to see Steve doing that.

They both told her what flavors they wanted, each on a waffle cone, and chose their toppings. She served it up to them rather quickly and took the credit card Nikki handed her placing it into a huge bulky looking device. Pulling on the handle it made a loud clacking noise as it copied the card information on the carbon copy paper. Since the charge was small Robin didn't bother to call the credit card company to okay the amount much to Nikki's relief.

So far, no one had caught her using it yet, or even bothered to ask for I.D. She had practiced her mother's signature almost every day for weeks trying to perfect it. The places she shopped at she was well known, so as long as she had the money to spend, they didn't seem to care or ask questions.

When the bills came in her parents didn't pay attention to them too much as her father made more than enough money able to afford not worrying over clothes and ice cream being purchased. All the same, Nikki used her mother's card as a rebellious teen statement over how strict they were with her sometimes, her father more than her mother in all honesty.

She was almost out of the park home free but as Nikki was signing her copy of the slip, Robin caught on that her forged signature didn't quite match the official signature on the card perfectly. Robin was very observant and it seemed it was hard to pull a fast one on her. She got an impish look on her face while letting Nikki finish signing for the ice cream.

"Speaking of pirates. Did you swipe your parent's card or something? You are so going to get busted one of these days. Don't ask me to come serve you your Sherbet in person when you're sitting in a prison cell. I won't be the only one wearing stripes then."

Robin grinned handing the card back to her and Nikki winked looking every bit as guilty for it but not really seeming to care.

"If I'm going to keep my silence on that one... ahem!"

Robin continued with another smug look while shaking the tip jar and clearing her throat. Nikki sighed but nodded and pulled out a few dollar bills from her purse. Robin cleared her throat again and she pulled out a few more than before and put it all in the jar making the sailor turned pirate smile sweetly from the successful extortion.

"You see? Out of the box thinking. My sales have never been higher and the boss is loving me right now. Which is more than I can say for Steve, anyway. He is floundering so hard when it comes to his flirtatious attempts at getting tips from the ladies."

"Poor Steve." Nikki echoed while licking her ice cream and grinning.

Robin gave a soft low laugh at his misfortune enjoying ripping on him while the girls enjoyed their treat still standing at the counter with her. Robin suddenly stopped and looked over in Mandy's direction only fully noticing her now unlike before and being curious over the new face.

"I never caught your name. I don't think we've officially met. Hi, I'm Robin!" The girl tapped her nametag as she said this then put out her hand to boldly shake Mandy's who lifted hers rather shyly to her in response. Locking eyes for a moment Robin seemed as if she were taking in all of her in a way that made her slightly blush and Mandy didn't even know why.

"I'm ummm... Mandy. A mutual friend of Steve's. Nice to meet you, Robin."

Nikki finished off her ice cream and cone rather quickly while watching the two of them interact as she licked her fingers rather noisily. She grabbed a napkin and wiped her face and hands off slightly groaning at the exchange. She tried to catch Robin's attention with her eyes and shaking her head.

For a moment Steve's co worker studied Mandy, but catching Nikki signaling to her she turned slowly to her with a somewhat hopeful and questioning look. Nikki shook her head 'no' while making a square with her hands in return to her. It was as if it had been communicated in some sort of code language that only the two of them understood.

Robin hung her head for a minute sighing in what seemed to be disappointment or defeat perhaps but then brightened up again despite this answer that Mandy didn't comprehend. Mandy looked over to Nikki but she made a face as if nothing was going on.

"Pleasure's all mine, Mandy. Any friend of Nikki's is also mine." Mandy noticed how she phrased it as well as how she left Steve out of that equation.

"Any favorite flavors besides the one you just ordered? My personal

favorite is the Mint Chocolate Chip."

Mandy smiled with her eyes lighting up at this. Nikki made a face at the mention of the ice cream flavor having a severe dislike of it as much as Mandy hated Caramel.

"Awesome, that's my favorite too. You have similar tastes as me then. I'm glad to know I'm not the only one who actually likes it."

Mandy replied softly grinning at finally meeting someone else for once who shared her love of the same flavor. Cherries Jubilee was good but it in no way compared to mint which was at the top of her list. It was right up there with the Cookie Dough, now ruined by Steve, and Cake Batter otherwise known as Birthday Cake.

"Oh, I should be so lucky for us to have the same tastes. It's just a shame that it's only when it comes to ice cream."

Robin responded craftily and rather enigmatically while softly smirking at Mandy lifting one eyebrow. Mandy nodded but then looked slightly confused thinking on this for a minute.

Nikki knew what she meant. Robin was clearly and shamelessly flirting with Mandy and she wasn't even picking up on it being the innocent girl she was. Nikki facepalmed at the sad hopeless scene before her. She was looking at Robin as if to tell her with her eyes to ease up and that her friend wasn't on the same page as her when it came to her specific 'flavor'.

When Mandy looked to Nikki she stopped nodding her head to the side towards her clearly talking to Robin in their code language again. Nikki looked away pretending to be not paying any attention to them as if she hadn't been motioning towards Robin about anything at all.

"Anyways, about Steve. Not to be rude to you or anything, sweetie, we love spending time with you too. But we came to see Steve as well. Is he here? He's in the back room isn't he? Oh, please, please, Robin, could you call him out here for us? I simply have to see him in that uniform! It will be the absolute highlight of my Starcourt experience!"

Nikki begged sweetly and Robin grinned mischievously while opening the glass window behind her.

"If he's not too busy stuffing his face with the bananas, sure. Works for me. Let him take the heat off of me for a little bit. I must warn you, I look better in it than he does. Feast your eyes, ladies."

Once it was open she stood in front of it with her arms crossed smirking. She tilted her head up while calling to him. Suddenly her voice was loud and powerful, a change from the soft dry breathy display of it earlier.

"Oh, Dingus! We need those two ice cream buckets up front, pronto! Stop eating the supply and get out here! We're all out and the customer's aren't too happy about it. Get a move on, sailor, hustle, hustle, hustle!"

She called out to him clapping her hands towards the back store room where shelves held extra supplies. It most likely also had a deep freezer storage for more ice cream to restock throughout the day during slow periods. She stuck her tongue out between her teeth and Nikki gave her a thumbs up sign.

Giving it a few minutes she lowered her head and had a dry lopsided smirk on her face as she waited. Her eyebrows were arched up in amusement so she was obviously enjoying calling him a dingus knowing it would get to him and get his attention. Before he came out she leaned in crooking her finger for them to come closer to her and whispered to them both.

"Don't mention the hat. He's a little sensitive about it. Company policy. Thinks it takes away the mystical super powers of his hair or something."

Robin was covering her mouth sideways with her hand as both of them laughed at her comment. The glass windows behind her were still open so they saw him pass by and he evidently heard a part of their conversation while making his way out to them. About a minute later he came out from the back pushing the door open while hauling two big containers full of ice cream one under each arm.

"What about my hat? I wash it everyday, just like my uniform, just like my hair, so don't even start with me on that one again or I'll leave you to clean that nasty milkshake machine all by yourself when shift is over. I swear it's like no one else cleans it but us two, that thing is nas-"

He said clearly agitated as he grunted while lifting the full plastic tubs, not even noticing they had company yet, and carried them over to the lineup of all the flavors in the front display freezer.

"-ty." He finished his sentence seeing Nikki and Mandy for the first time as they grinned at him. He lit up instantly when he recognized them forgetting all about his outfit or Robin taunting him.

Setting the tubs of ice cream down on the floor he let out a huge sigh from the heavy lifting while smiling at them making a show of it as he wiped his brow. He was apparently going to switch out the flavor buckets on the ice cream that had been fast sellers and were running dangerously low. It appeared to be the Rocky Road and Chocolate Peanut Butter. He forgot all about it as he grinned happy to see them. Mandy guessed Robin was good company but he needed a break from her cutting into him from time to time.

When he recovered from carrying the heavy tubs he walked over to them from behind the counter to greet them more personally. Showing off to them he flipped his scooper and put it in his shorts pocket.

"Ahoy, Captain Steve. Nice threads. I bet Nancy enjoys them too, huh?"

Nikki looked him up and down grinning at him. His smiling face turned to a soft look of shame at realizing they were seeing him in all his glory of wearing the ridiculous sailor outfit. He quickly took the white sailor hat off his head and ran his fingers through his hair trying to comb and perfect it then stuffed it into his other pocket blushing slightly.

"Hey, ladies." He smiled recovering quickly and was doing his best to put on his usual charm despite the regulated uniform cramping his style. Even with the ditched hat and his hair on full display he

seemed like half his usual cocky and confident self. When he saw the shared amusement on all three of their faces at his cover he sighed and almost seemed to pout.

"Don't look at me like that. I either wear it or I'm out of a job and my dad will ride me for it."

Nikki and Mandy took one look at Robin's face with her pinching her mouth shut hiding her peals of soft laughter and all three of them couldn't help but lose it together. Mandy's laugh was softer than the others while trying hard not to rip into his pride. She covered her mouth with her hand and stopped long before the others did feeling bad for him.

"Steve, don't you just look ADORABLE!?" Nikki squealed out barely able to hide her giggles as she said it. He gave her a sarcastic but somewhat annoyed look and nodded at her assessment of him, his feathery hair bouncing a bit over his forehead. No matter what, Mandy couldn't deny he had lovely hair, no matter what mood or life change he was going through.

"Laugh it up, yeah, it's really funny. Thank you for mocking my pain. Go head, keep it comin'." He had his hands on his hips with a full on pout and turned glaring at Robin for setting him up for this one as she joined in with Nikki's laughing fit.

When their laughter finally died down and they all got serious. Nikki and Mandy decided to let him off the hook and just hang out with him for a little bit to cheer him up. Robin looked disappointed in them for letting him off so easy but shook her head and took care of the customers giving him a break.

She sometimes narrowed her eyes at him in between speaking to the customers in a monotonous voice serving them their orders halfheartedly and ringing them up while he sat in the diner and chatted with them. Looking over to the counter Mandy saw Robin angrily changing out the ice cream bins and replacing them with the ones Steve brought out before they would melt and be wasted. She was sort of angry while struggling to lift the full ones back into the display freezer and staring Steve down once she finally managed.

Nikki was first to break the long silence between them at the table. She had went back to Robin ordering another cone for herself and was now cozy with Steve ready for conversation while digging into it.

"So what's happening with your plans for Purdue? Are you going to get in or what?"

They were now sitting at one of the dining tables and Steve twirled his hat playing with it nervously as his future was being picked apart, questioned, and assessed by Nikki. He obviously did not want to be reminded of it but he gave them the inside scoop at Scoops Ahoy!

"Well, my grade point average is decent enough for it thanks to Nancy helping me. But the issue is getting the student loans. So I had a long talk with my dad and he told me I need to earn a working man's wage and get some life experience before I go to college. He said I should work hard and save up enough money until graduation rolls around put it into my savings. If I put it to good use like getting my own car, for example, and have some saved up towards my college books, then he said he would help me with tuition. In forcing me to do this, he also wants me to show him I'm serious about being a mature responsible adult and going to college before he thinks about helping me cover the cost of it. "

Steve made air quotes over the "mature responsible adult" portion of his words and sighed. Nikki stopped eating her ice cream and listened intently to him. Mandy did too feeling bad about her friend being so low about life right now. The teen years were rough, especially when it came to trying to figure out ones future, and how to survive once out on your own no longer living at home with your family. They were all growing up. A part of her was glad she wasn't alone in this.

"Apparently, he wants me to learn how difficult life can be without a proper education and career to afford needful things and surviving barely on bottom feeder wages. I swear, everything is a lesson with him and my mom just goes right along with it. I'd have been in law school as a newborn if he had it his way. I don't want to be a lawyer. I don't even know what I want to be but I definitely don't want to be him or do what he does. He HATES that."

Mandy gave him a sympathetic look. She honestly didn't know what



it was like to be so controlled by a parent like Steve was. Her parents trusted her to make her own life decisions and to make her own way in the world and would be happy with whatever she chose if it made her happy. But all the same, she felt bad for Steve imagining how hard it could be to have rich parents who expected so highly of him not allowing him to make mistakes and learn or grow from them.

"Are your wages at least good?" Nikki asked, eating her second ice cream cone while getting into his story.

"Not really. Unless you consider three bucks an hour 'good'. Not even my tips can make up for what I'm lacking in pay of this crap job."

He looked so depressed at having to work there with the degrading low pay. Even if it was just to prove to his father he would take the furthering of his education to heart and earn the tuition for it from him to be able to go.

He suddenly flattened his Scoops hat against the table with his hand in frustration and put his chin in his hand looking out over the mall being miles away and mentally checking out. Mandy frowned feeling bad for him wishing there was something she could do to help. Some way to encourage him.

"Well, if it makes you feel any better Steve, I'm not going to a fancy college. I can't afford that either. I plan to go to one of the smaller community colleges right here in Hawkins."

He looked back at her and softly smiled appreciating her trying to cheer him up.

"I'm not even going." Nikki shrugged and confessed licking her ice cream and making a face as if she didn't care.

They both looked at her shocked at this sudden admission.

"What? Why not? Won't your dad disown you if you don't?" Steve asked incredulously and put his hat back on seeing Robin wave at him and put her hands on her hips as if to tell him he needed to get back over there and help at the counter.

"He doesn't know yet. When I graduate I'm packing my bags shortly

after and heading out to New York City. I'm going to waitress out there or find some kind of job and work on finding a little apartment or something to call my own. My plan is to work a few jobs long enough to keep afloat while I try and become a movie star or on Broadway. I'll take auditions, get a portfolio and headshot together, and even pay for an agent. That's my dream. You should follow yours Steve."

She said smiling and Mandy was in awe of her bold decision.

"I always knew you wanted your name in those lights, Nikki. Promise me you will at least write to me or call okay? New York is so far away."

Mandy frowned and Steve high fived Nikki before excusing himself to go back to the counter saying he would catch them later at the party and had to get back to work.

"Bye, Steve. See you in a few hours, Captain." He glared back at her for that one but smiled regardless and went back behind the counter. Turning to Mandy she took both her hands in her own promising her.

"I will. Don't worry, Mandy. You'll always be my best friend no matter where we go or the miles between us. Don't tell Alex or Tucker yet. I haven't told them but I plan to when the time is right."

Mandy nodded. As they sat there watching Steve and Robin attempt to work together but sometimes getting on each other's nerves, bumping into one another and making messes, seeing the two of them going back and forth, Nikki and Mandy smiled at one another over how comical and sweet it was.

Even in their mild hostility towards one another, they seemed to have fun poking at each other and irritating one another, even sharing a laugh sometimes together. It would seem that if Steve and Nancy weren't so happily in love and loyal to one another, Steve and Robin would make a cute couple too.

When Mandy asked about their obvious energy together Nikki laughed so hard she almost fell out of her chair.

"What? What's so funny?" Mandy asked not getting why she was laughing so hard at her observation and question.

"Oh, God, Mandy. Okay. So... Robin is..." She trailed off trying to put this in the best way she could that Mandy would understand.

"Robin is different. She's playing for the other team. She's... all her friends are guy friends. She doesn't date boys." The more Nikki tried to explain the more Mandy didn't understand. Putting her hands up still unsure of what Nikki was trying to say, she finally just blurted it out knowing it was okay because Robin wasn't in the closet and didn't care really who knew.

"Robin likes girls. There. Plain and simple. She's into her own gender." Nikki went back to eating her ice cream but watching Mandy's face as it slowly dawned on her. When Mandy looked back up to Robin who smiled at her in between taking an order she suddenly got it now. The code language. The facial expressions between her and Nikki.

"Oh. Oh! Umm... okay. Well, that's... cool. No judgement." Mandy smiled softly and waved to Robin to let her know everything was fine and Robin looked confused but waved back.

"Don't worry. I told her you don't play for that same team. She'll be cool about it." Nikki said winking to Mandy and her face got flushed at the idea that Robin would like her in that way. It wasn't something she had ever thought about, experienced, or knew how to properly map out in her mind when it came to love, dating, and romance.

She looked back to see Steve with her and could almost pick up on the fact that he did truly like Robin himself and felt a bit of sadness for him in knowing Robin would never like him back, even if Nancy was out of the picture, which she could not see happening. Being a good guy, Steve out of respect for Nancy, kept his distance and remained his usual friendly yet antagonistically playful self around her not crossing any boundaries.

"Does Steve know?" Mandy asked and Nikki shrugged. They sat there for a while going over the items in their bags and resting for a bit before they would continue their shopping and then go home.

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The sun was doing its best to shine through one of Billy's windows and the half light had made him begin to stir out of sleep. Last night he had forgotten to drape his thick blanket fully over it like he usually did to keep it dark in his room. It was hanging open by a corner with streaks of daylight being let in and causing him to pull his thick covers over his head groaning and struggling to stay asleep.

Even if he had blocked the sunlight from getting in, it wasn't long before he heard a soft knocking at his door bringing him slowly to consciousness. Neil never knocked softly so he reasoned while half asleep that it was either Susan or Max, neither of which he really wanted to talk to or deal with. Still, it was better than having his father at his door so he welcomed the small mercies in life he was granted.

"Billy? I'm sorry to wake you. Are you up?"

Susan's soft timid voice called to him somewhat muffled by the thick wooded space between them on the other side of his door. She never liked to be the one to knock in order to ask him for favors or to disturb him. Usually it was Neil pounding on his door being much more demanding or Max having to get his attention because her father in law told her to. He could hear the weakness and fear in her voice and it made him cringe at the sound of it.

"I am now, Susan. What do you need?"

He said sighing and attempting to put on his best polite well mannered voice even while not being fully awake as he claimed he was. If he was impolite to Susan it usually got back to his old man who then had to teach him manners in ways he cared not to learn.

He began pulling the covers off of himself while looking at his alarm clock and grumbling into his pillow. It was a weekend and only ten in the morning. Usually on weekends he would try to sleep in until noon before being asked to chauffeur Max around to whatever damn location she desired. As if he were a servant to her and she was Queen of his car and his free time.

"Well, there is this new mall that just opened up. The umm. The... the Star... what's the name of that new shopping mall? Do you know it? I can't for the life of me remember the name. How silly of me, I knew it. I just..."

Susan stammered deep in thought asking him while grasping to recall the official name of the location. He was getting more and more irritated by the minute when she couldn't spit it out.

He sat on the edge of his bed now in nothing but his boxers and bent over slightly with his face in his hands trying to block out as much of her as he could while still getting the point from all of her droning on. Her voice was gentle but it was still getting on his nerves due to still being out of it and wanting to just curl back up in bed rolling over to get more sleep.

"The Starcourt Mall. Yes, I know the one."

Billy corrected Neil's ditzy wife with the right name so she would finish telling him the full details of what Neil wanted him to do for today. He knew it involved Max, it always did. He just needed to know what time to take her and what time to bring her back.

"Okay great. I'm glad I don't have to give you directions because I honestly haven't been out there just yet myself..."

She got quiet again. He was sighing while pinching the space between his eyes wishing she would get to the point and finish asking. He rubbed the sleep out of the corner of his eyes groaning trying to fully wake himself. He was trying hard not to let his exasperated and impatient tone with her become so transparent in his voice.

The Starcourt Mall. He knew about it but never bothered to go. Although he wasn't here when they started working on it, he heard about it in passing from Tommy, Carol, and Tina because the movie theatre that was being built inside of it was all they would talk about for almost half a day when the subject had been brought up.

They had told him the Hawkins Regional Cineplex was old and didn't have as many theatre rooms and that the quality of their screens and

projectors were terrible often messing up during the shows. Even sometimes unable to be fixed with tickets being refunded to people. The place often smelled like stale popcorn, spilled food long stained into the carpets, and baby diapers.

It was pretty run down, and according to Tina and Carol, this town was due for a newer, bigger, better movie theatre. They also told him the most clean areas, in fact the only ones of the entire building of the Cineplex, were the restrooms themselves due to intense inspections from corporate and the health and safety board. They had been called on account of the wellbeing of the patrons who had complained and the owners of the movie theatre had been threatened to be shut down numerous times over them not maintaining the rest areas well enough.

He was surprised he even bothered to listen as he barely cared for going to the movies. He liked horror films but preferred to watch them at home alone in the dark with a willing girl scared shitless to help him score. Not in some stuffy cramped movie theatre or their uncomfortable chairs where he couldn't get close enough to a chick to get any action.

In fact, of all their mind numbingly boring dribble back and forth, the only thing that piqued his interest was the mention of Lovelace by Tommy. It was a new cutting edge Lingerie fashion store that catered to rather... adult tastes never before heard of being so public. It could almost rival Victoria's Secret but had way more loud and outlandish sultry garments for sale and he was dying to check it out if only for the ladies that might be there shopping.

He could imagine some pretty kinky women would buy from that store and he could always pretend he was looking just for a friend if he got questioned by one of them. Maybe he could pick up on a decently attractive loose girl there to help him get his mind off of Mandy and get him out of his funk of not even bothering with Tina as he had originally intended.

Susan's voice once more brought him back to the discussion at hand and he grumbled low in his throat still wanting more sleep.

"Right. So, yes, the Starcourt. Thank you, Billy, for helping me get the

name right. Anyways, I was hoping you could take Maxine out a little earlier than usual today. She wants to meet up with her new friends from school at the new mall."

She paused still beating around the bush and he was at his limit wondering when she would tell him what time and simply leave going back to whatever it was she had been doing before bothering him.

New friends? Who the hell would want to hang out with a prissy little snot like Max? Probably more snot nosed brats just like herself, he could bet.

"I would take her myself but I have to stay here and straighten up the house before your father comes home and I have errands to run. I have too much to do today, unfortunately."

Her voice sounded extremely nervous on that note. She obviously did not want to displease Neil by having him come home to a less than perfect household. In addition, here came the excuses for being a useless mom too busy for her own kid but a loyal housewife under her husband's bootheel.

"I understand. No problem." His responses were getting shorter with her.

Billy was normally extremely cranky first thing in the morning, especially when woken up from having such a nice wet dream, or just woken up in general by someone before he was ready to get up.

He sat there trying to remember the dream but only able to recall slowly that it had been about Mandy, of all girls, and this puzzled him greatly. Until he remembered their kiss the night before and cuddling her on the couch nuzzling into her neck smelling how good she smelled. He slowly ran his tongue over his lower lip as if he could taste her mouth again on his.

Billy couldn't understand why his heart had been pounding so hard last night. He had kissed many girls in his lifetime, all of them the same to him, and none of them took him by surprise or made him so exciteable as Mandy had that night.

His nice charade with Susan was faltering fast as he was thinking of Mandy and all her toying with him which was only making it build even more. He wanted her out of his head already. The kiss he got wasn't enough and he wanted more but she wouldn't let him get past it.

He did however manage to get her to give him her number telling him she had her own private line in her room. That must have meant something... right?

Suddenly now he was picturing Mandy in one of those sexy little Lingerie numbers and it was working him up even more. He wished he had never heard of Lovelace at this point. It took all he had to snap his attention back to Susan once he remembered they were having a conversation.

"Are you sure it's okay? I don't know your plans but I know you usually like to go out on the weekends. Only take her if... if it's alright with you. I just hope it's not an inconvenience for you. I know you tend to need your freedoms too."

Like she cared about his freedoms or plans. Neither her nor Neil did. She had to do whatever his father decided would be done. Her voice was even more anxious now at the mention of Neil. She was trying to make it sound as if it were a favor they were simply asking of him. They both knew it wasn't a choice or option for Billy but rather a command of what was going to happen regardless of how he might protest. Neil's word was law in this house.

If Max asked for it, his father would make Billy make it happen for her if he couldn't himself and often because what pleased Max pleased Susan. She was the favorite, had been since their first meeting as children with the union of their families. Everything was about her in order to make Susan happy. Even at the expense of his own happiness, his plans be damned, put on the back burner.

"Don't worry about it. I've got time." He said his patience thinning by the minute.

"Okay, good. Neil and I really appreciate you taking her for us."



Another moment of silence as he waited for clarification on when he should take her and pick her up. Billy guessed he would have to say it out loud and be the one to ask. She was giving him a headache.

"What... time?" He said practically growling it out trying to control himself as he stared at the door almost as if he could see her standing there wringing her hands in fear of talking to him.

"Oh, a time frame. Right. Ummm... so just drop her off at the mall in an hour or so? And please just pick her up before supper time tonight by seven?

In his head he was shouting for her to piss off but he had to control his mouth or it would be his ass later tonight.

"Yup. I'll take her there in an hour. Just let me shower, wake up, and have some breakfast first before we leave. Is that all, Susan?"

He just wanted her to go away. He wanted all of them to go away. He was tired of the gross ignorance and dysfunction between all of them and couldn't wait to graduate and get out of there. The moment he packed his things and left they truly would no longer be his "family" or responsibility ever again. Especially Maxine.

Why couldn't she just skate to the Mall? They weren't that far from town it wouldn't be hard at all for her. Still, if he didn't comply then Susan would somehow let it slip out to Neil, even if just in passing during light conversation, and in turn he would get another huge lecture and possibly some welts to match it as a strict reminder of Billy's best interests to obey his father.

"Yes, that's all I wanted to ask. Alright. I have some eggs, toast, and bacon already made up in the kitchen. Feel free to help yourself to some when you're ready."

Susan was trying to sound bright, happy, chipper, almost motherly to him. She would never be his mother. She could never hide her true dislike of him and often wondered if she wished he was out of the picture as if he were a thorn in her new family's side. A rip in the tapestry of their lives.

Even with all the stress and darkness in this house she still tried to be the ever loving happy home maker trophy wife. She would put on a smile that was often forced and try to make believe everything was just dandy as if they were the fucking Brady Bunch. Billy often wondered just what the hell Susan was thinking when she got involved with and decided to marry his old man.

"Yup. Goodbye, Susan."

His dismissive farewell to her silenced her and she softly walked away having completed her task of recruiting him for his job for today. Billy said it flatly, devoid of any emotion, just wanting her to go away and leave him alone to get ready with his usual routine so he could take Max and get this shit over with.

He had to prepare for tonight's pool party at Harrington's. He had already dropped off the party favors to him so things seemed to still be in good standing on their agreement. Still, he guessed one good thing would come of going to Starcourt. "King" Steve was most likely working his shift today so if he used Max as an excuse to go inside he could stop by and give him a little bit of hell over his dorky work uniform and maybe get some good laughs about it.

Getting up he walked over to his nightstand and first thing he did was to light up his morning cigarette as if it were a regular school day and took a long drag of it checking himself in the mirror. He had work to do. Waking up for him was always on the wrong side of the bed and he never looked like his usual handsome well groomed self. All the same he headed to the bathroom with his towel and change of clothes but Max had evidently beat him there.

He stood in front of the door waiting for about five minutes before knocking on it to tell her to stop hogging it if she wanted to get to the mall so badly, him being her only ride there.

"Max, let's go! If you're not out of there in the next two minutes I'm going back to bed and you can forget your little outing with the shitheads at the mall."

That got to her and she opened the door scowling up at him and pushed past him ducking under his arm that was hanging over the

door frame while casually leaning on it. Coming out she opted to go finish getting ready in her room instead. Before she shut her own door she got mouthy with him which only made him grin at how easy it was to set her off. He would get to her any way he could in return for making him her personal nanny practically every weekend.

"They're not shitsheads. They're my friends. Something you wouldn't know anything about, Billy, I'm sure." She snapped at him and stood there for a minute wanting to see anger in his face but found none.

"Oh, Max. Stop. You're hurting my feelings. I might cry." He said mockingly at her with a fake pout and then simply looked stone faced at her while puffing on his cigarette. He blew some of it into her face and she waved it away with her hand glaring at him.

"Be ready in five or I'm leaving you here. I won't warn you again." His tone was ice cold and stern with her. She hadn't upset him one bit but he was making himself clear he wouldn't wait around for her much longer than necessary.

Max spun angrily and slammed her door not having any more words to waste on him. He just shrugged not giving a damn about her tantrum and went into the bathroom to fix himself up.

After dropping her off at the mall he thought perhaps he might consider calling up Tommy and Carol to see what they were up to before going to the party. Maybe they would meet at the Quarry and kill a few beers to loosen up before heading to Harrington's place.

As he showered enjoying the hot water on his bare muscled body, it suddenly came to him why he liked Mandy so much. The brief altercation he had with his step sister had somehow helped to make him see things more clearly and confirm it.

Max feared him and when he ruled over her she did what he told her to out of that fear. She may give attitude but she always bent to his will and obeyed. Mandy didn't. If she didn't want to do what he told her to or asked of her she would fight him and do the exact opposite. The only time he was able to even slightly bend her to his will was if he drove her crazy with his hands or mouth or whispering certain things in her ear and even then it wasn't a sure thing.

She always found a way to resist him. Maybe that's why he was dreaming of her now all the time and still chasing after something he deep down felt he would never be able to obtain. He wanted her and there was no more denying that.

He would call her and see what she was up to while Max got ready. If she picked up he would do his best to talk her into meeting up with him at Starcourt and they could have some fun. Maybe he could talk her into going to Lovelace with him so he could see her lovely blushing face and tease her just how he liked to. He was getting turned on just thinking about it.

After his shower he dressed and groomed himself up nicely just in case she picked up and he dialed the number on the piece of paper she wrote it on. He tried calling her but the line kept ringing endlessly and she didn't pick up. He tried again several more times but no answer. He couldn't deny he felt pissed and disappointed with each time he called only to be met with the sound of her line ringing and never hearing her voice.

Maybe she was avoiding him because of the kiss last night? Maybe he had scared her off by being too forward in asking for it? Fuck. What did he do wrong now? He honestly thought she enjoyed it so why give her number if she was going to ignore his calls?

Sighing with frustration and giving up on his little fantasy over Lovelace or seeing Mandy, he went into the kitchen and took what he wanted of the breakfast on a plate and ate it rather quickly. When he was done he hollared for Max and she came out of her room also grabbing some before they left.

They both walked outside to his car with Max following behind him putting a decent space between them angrily. He was just shocked she was actually ready to go for once and on schedule.

"Don't fucking slam it this time, ginger."

He said as he walked over to his side of the Camaro. The look on her face when he called her that was priceless, but most likely now she would. Her face changed from disgust with him to suddenly rather smug as she began to speak with a high handed attitude while

heading to the passenger side and waiting for him to open it so she could get in.

"Hey Billy, how was your date last night? Did you get far? Oh, that's right, I forgot. Our neighbor, Mandy, has more common sense than the usual stupid bimbos you go out with and shut you down after one kiss. Too bad, so sad. Guess you won't be getting what you want out of her. She's smart to avoid you like the walking disease you are."

Billy's face was unreadable but he was clearly confused as to what brought this on or why she was feeling bold enough to speak to him like this.

He unlocked the door and leaned over the top of his car from his side pointing his keys at her along with his finger giving her only one stern warning. He was glaring at her now for even daring to put Mandy's name in her smartass mouth or make any mention of what he did with girls he was seeing. Even more confusing, how did she know he only got as far as a kiss? Was the little shit spying on him now and hiding out somewhere in the bushes watching?

"Mind your own business, shitbird. You don't know fuck all about dating or what I did last night. What I do any night with any girl, even her. That isn't any concern of yours so just keep your ignorant mouth shut, got it? Stick to what you know. Arcade games, skateboarding, and being a complete loser along with your loser group you hang out with."

They both got in and this time Billy was the one to slam his door right along with her. He buckled himself in and stared at the windshield, the keys already in the ignition and the car running, waiting for her to put her seatbelt on. As soon as Max buckled up he was already flooring it and pressing on the gas pedal speeding down the back road towards town and to the Starcourt Mall.

There was an eerie silence between them and obviously it was getting to him as much as it was her. He was about to drown her out with his loud tunes reaching for the volume on the stereo when she spoke up quickly wanting to bait him even more.

She wanted to get as much time to do it as she possibly could before

they arrived and before he could no longer hear her over his foul obnoxious noise he called music. She had no idea why she was feeling so brave today to antagonize him like this.

Maybe it was because he had insulted her friends earlier calling them shitheads. Maybe it was because she had finally had enough of his shit and how he treated her. Or maybe she just wanted to just to see what he would do or if she could get to him so much he would just stop being a jerk all the time tiring himself out. She knew it was a slim chance but maybe if she pushed him enough he would not want to do this hostility crap anymore between them.

"Oh, but I do know about it. I know all about what you two did last night. See, sometimes when you're asleep, Billy, and having your stupid little dreams... I can hear you talking next door in your room. The walls are pretty thin. I AM right next door to you after all, unlike mom and dad, unfortunately for me."

His breath caught in his throat and he made a soft choking sound but held it back trying to ignore her. He wouldn't dare look at her or let her know just how much what she said was worrying him. He kept his eyes on the road and driving.

"So I heard you talking about what you did with her and what you wanted to do with her. I gotta say, what you actually did together and what you want to do don't weigh up evenly according to those little night time confessions you blurt out. Keep dreaming. Also, newsflash? You're gross. Flat out disgusting. It's more than I ever wanted to know about you. TMI thanks. So please do us both a favor and just stop sleepwalking."

His hands were gripping the steering wheel in a slow burning anger almost going completely white in his knuckles. He had nothing to say back to that in return. Nothing at all. His jaw was clenching and moving as he grit his teeth in pure anger over what she had revealed to him.

She folded her arms over her chest grinning victoriously seeing that she had successfully gotten to him and that he feared what things she might possibly know about him now. It was evidenced by the absolutely livid look all over his reddening face. His nostrils were

slightly flaring and his mouth was in his usual angry pout, his lips pushed out menacingly as he looked ahead at nothing but the road in front of them. Finally, he found his voice and challenged her.

"Bullshit. You're fucking lying. The walls can't be that thin. And I don't talk in my sleep that crap is for kids. Like wetting the fucking bed or hiding under the covers from the boogeyman. Nice try, shitbird."

The pure denial of it was fueling him to simply not accept what Max was saying about him. He was tense as he tried to call her on what she had accused him of and was trying hard to invalidate every word of it in pure disbelief. He simply couldn't accept that he talked about personal things in his sleep or said things he wouldn't want anyone to know so easily and openly. Deny it all he wanted, how the hell would he know if he did it or not if he was asleep while doing it?

Could she really have heard? Or was the more logical explanation simply that she had been physically spying on them that night near the front porch of Mandy's house and listened in on them with nothing better to do on a Friday night?

Max threw her hands up in the air rolling her eyes and saw that he would need proof so she would simply have to tell him some of the things he had said. She would take great pleasure in it knowing it would tear into him while also clearing her name of being a liar.

"Mandy, can I kiss you? Just one kiss? Oh, Mandy, you're lips are so soft! I had hoped to be alone with you on our date tonight. Come closer, Mandy, just let me hold you. I'll behave. Don't say no, I promise you won't regret it. I'm dying to have you in my bed because I wanna rock your world all night long, baby! Ohhhh, Mandy!"

Again, his breath caught in his throat and he swallowed hard beginning to sweat a little. It was true, then. Max had heard things she wasn't suppose to hear. That sounded every inch of the kinds of thoughts and communications he had with Mandy whether in his head or in person with her.

"Seriously? Ew. Like I said, gross. Told you I heard you."

Max began mocking him making kissy noises and puckering out her lips. She had only repeated some of the more tame things he had murmured in his sleep proving she had heard them and that she knew things about the two of them and their "date" night. She laughed at all of it which only served to make him even more angry as he sat in silence too mad to comment.

Feeling the intensity of that silence she suddenly went quiet herself letting her laughter fizzle out nervously. Sitting there gripping onto the car trying not to be jostled around as he sped down the road, she thought on other things she heard him moan out in his bedroom late at night. She was not going to even dare repeat those things not wanting to go any deeper or say the more disgusting rated R rated stuff he came up with. Things she didn't feel right saying out loud.

Her skin crawled just thinking about the perverted phrases she had heard him declare rather loudly while his bed made random noises. She had hoped the noises were from him moving around as he tossed and turned in his sleep and not from something else he might have been doing. Her stomach lurched at the thought of it and she quickly put that out of her mind before she hurled.

It had kept her awake most of the night. She was more pissed about her sleep being disturbed with his pillowtalk while having to use her own to cover her face and ears just to finally fall back asleep through it all and not so much the things he had said about Mandy Hawkins.

Still, she felt bad for her neighbor now being a new target of his. She seemed like a sweet friendly girl and Max pitied her. She didn't deserve someone like her asshole stepbrother hounding her trying to get in her pants and use her. It was almost enough to make her have the courage to walk over there one day and warn her away from him.

Perhaps it was unnecessary after all, judging by how he wasn't getting anything out of her, according to what he said in his sleep. Mandy most likely already knew and was taking precautions protecting herself. It would seem she had a good head on her shoulders after all and wouldn't be set up by him only to be knocked down.

Max imagined that it was Mandy bothering Billy a great deal, most



likely over her spurning his attentions towards her, and that was why he was dreaming about it and pining over her. Either he wanted something he couldn't get due to his stubborn nature not wanting to admit defeat over anything, or he truly liked Mandy deep down and it was upsetting him.

She most likely believed it to be the former explanation and not the latter. Billy didn't fall in love. Billy didn't long term date and didn't care about relationships or maintaining them. He only lived for the moment and that included girls.

From what Max had seen of Mandy so far, she wasn't his usual typing at all. She was soft, shy, sweet, and awkward. Even clumsy a bit and didn't dress like the stuck up girls Max had met that rode in the car with Billy sometimes. She was the total opposite. So why would he go for her? It was strange.

Looking over to see the effect she had on him by outing him on all of this, she saw he was pushing harder on the gas pedal and his only response was to crank his rock music up signaling she had thoroughly devastated and embarrassed him with what she had said. With the new knowledge that she could hear him talking in his sleep while dreaming he was clearly on edge about it.

All his secrets and fantasies spilling out to her, especially the ones about Mandy. Private things she had no business knowing. Deep things she imagined even he didn't want to know he knew but had forgotten only to remember them in his nocturnal ramblings. If she told him the rest of what he said sometimes that had nothing to do with their new neighbor, he would most likely have even more of a vicious breakdown.

So she didn't talk about those darker secrets or push it. The more abstract painful things that he kept locked within himself. Things about Neil and his painful past and growing up. Pieces of his upbringing that showed his bullying and hateful personality was used to mask the deep hurt he had within himself. Maxine saw how Neil treated him. Had grown up with him knowing. But there was nothing she could do to stop it and still couldn't. She knew Billy better than anyone else and yet she was still always so angry with him because of how he treated her.

Taking out that pain on her when she knew the real person he wanted to hurt, hit, or explode on was his own father. So she put up with it despite her hating all of it. Max was his verbal punching bag that seemed to help him release a bit of that pain but it wasn't helping much anymore. Over the years it was getting worse the older he got. He was getting more unhinged and she feared him doing something crazy or irreversible. Something he could never take back. Like hitting her. Or her mother. Or maybe going full on psycho and killing someone while getting in a brutal fight with them, perhaps his own dad if he pushed him enough and he broke completely. Where would it end? How would it stop? Was it too late for Billy to change?

Billy glared quietly over at Max as she sat there apparently in deep thought, all of her vindictive laughter at a ceasefire, and he saw she was afraid. Whether of him, or for Mandy since she now knew his intentions towards her and how he felt about her, he couldn't quite tell. She was most likely reflecting deeply on how she had outed his deep feelings and personal thoughts to himself while also outing herself for eavesdropping unintentionally in on him when he was at his most vulnerable state.

He knew if she ever said anything to anyone, especially to Mandy the object of his dreams, which were now laid bare and open before his pissant of a step sister, he would find a way to get even with her and would use their parents to do it. Maybe even find a way to get her grounded so she couldn't have her little outings anymore with her shithead "friends".

Suddenly he came up with a plan to keep her from telling anyone else what she now knew, some of his most private thoughts and feelings. Something to silence her so she wouldn't ever out anything to anyone. It wasn't a plan to get her grounded so much as to get her to think about her delusion that she had ANY kind of upper hand over him and make her back down knowing her place.

Max noticed he slowed down and turned the music down to a softer decible. Obviously, he had something he wanted to say to her. She tensed waiting for it never knowing just what he might be capable of and realizing she must have gone way too far. Pushing him over the edge he was dangerous and now she feared for her safety being in the explosive death trap she was stuck in with him.

"How much do you like your shiny new friends, Max?" He said slowly, his voice low but clearly angry and menacing. Threatening even as soft as it was with a firmness that was not deceptive to the underlying danger and animosity beneath it.

"Do you really like them a lot? Do you care about them? You seem to like seeing them everyday in school and now love going out with them places on the weekend while making me take you there all the time like I'm your damn chaperone and personal driver?"

She looked out the window away from him hiding her frightened expression at his cruel tone of voice. She could feel him building up to something really nasty and now she regretted telling him she heard him last night or teasing him about it.

When Billy saw she wouldn't face him or answer, he reached over and grabbed her wrist firmly making her face him. Looking into his vicious and terrible blue eyes her softened fearful ones were no match for him. His were cool and icy showing no other emotion to give him away. Hers were betraying her inner most fear of him exposing it. He glowered at her darkly as he held her wrist getting her full attention now, looking back and forth from time to time between her and the road so as not to have a wreck or wind up with the Camaro in a ditch. His mouth eventually set in a hard thin line with his lips pursed tight together before finishing what he was saying.

"Well... how would you like it if I made it to where they weren't around anymore? What if I made it so you weren't able to see them ever again? Don't believe I can do that, Maxine? Call my bluff, I dare you. Because I know people and I assure you I can. See, I do have friends Max, despite what you think you know about me. My friends unlike yours are bigger, meaner, and stronger, almost up to my level. I've gotten to know some very dangerous people in my crew already since moving here. People I run with in certain circles that are far above anything you could imagine in your worst nightmares."

She was trembling in his grip and he could feel it. His message most effective. The threat beginning to be perceived by her undeniably.

"And WE can MAKE things happen, Max. So I suggest that if you like

your little friends being... around... for you to spend time with them, that you never repeat to another living soul ANYTHING you hear in my room or otherwise about me. Not to your friends. Not to our parents. And especially not to Mandy Hawkins. Understand? Have I made myself undeniably clear to you?"

His tongue darted out from his mouth only showing the tip as he looked back to her with his fierce eyes enjoying how terrified she was at his simple and effective threat. He knew deep down he wasn't planning anything. Wouldn't do anything. He didn't know anyone that would hurt a kid the way he implied. But he had to make her believe he could. To truly believe he did know such people. It was the only way to get her to keep her big fat mouth closed.

"Stop listening in on me at night or any other time of day for that matter. Stop trying to get into my personal business from now on. Or your friends will be in a world of pain. Got it?"

All she could do was nod as tears began to well up inside of her eyes. He finally let her go and she snapped her wrist back to her side of the car and cradled it defensively. It didn't hurt, he somehow managed to hold her tight without the risk of putting any marks or bruises on her, but it had scared her all the same.

"One last thing. Stop. Slamming. My. Car. Door."

Pulling away from her he put his eyes back on the road and back to fully concentrating on driving. Turning the knob he turned his music up as loud as they both could stand it as he ignored her the rest of the way enjoying her silence and putting her in check.

When they arrived at the mall she was completely mute as she climbed out of his car and even shut his door ever so gently without slamming it. Finally she was learning not to get out of line with him and recognizing who was in charge between the two of them. He had finally found his leverage, as wrong as it had been to use, to make her listen more effectively.

A part of himself actually felt guilty for doing that to her but he crushed it down just like everything else. If Neil could verbally and emotionally threaten and keep his ass in line, Maxine could benefit

from the same treatment from him. She was out of control in her own way and spoiled rotten thinking she could run over anyone she damn well pleased to get what she wanted.

Still, he could not help but feel maybe he pushed those thoughts home a little too much into her mind and somewhere deep down inside he actually hated himself for doing it. He actually felt bad. He fought the urge to rage or to tear up when he felt his eyes begin to prickle slightly. This had never happened to him before so the strangeness of it all really bothered him making it even harder not to give into it and lose his mask and self control.

Why should he care? She had no right to know all his deepest innermost secrets, desires, plans, or what he did. Just exactly what else had she heard? How much did she really know about him now? How much of it from his past or from other things outside of Mandy?

She had clearly overstepped her boundaries with him on that one. She could hate him, she could fear him, she could do whatever she pleased, he didn't care. As long as she knew better than to mess with him spreading things around about him to her friends or whoever else.

Whatever worked to make her keep her silence. Nothing was going to jeopardize him seeing and or being with Mandy. Not even a stupid thirteen year old little girl with a big mouth not knowing when to keep it shut who liked to stick her freckled nose into other people's business just to stir up shit.

He parked the Camaro and lit up a cigarette calming himself before he stepped inside the Starcourt for the first time determined he would head to the Scoops Ahoy! ice cream parlor looking for Sailor Steve. He needed a little comic relief but would have to watch it and not go too far or the booze he bought him for his party would mean nothing anymore as a bargaining chip.

Walking through one of the five glass front doors Billy got quite a few stares from female admirer's as he made his way to the center of the first floor. He figured out by the large neon signs he was in the food court area so he knew he was in the right place.

Glancing over he saw Max sitting by herself at a wooden bench near a rather large fountain. She was sitting there in a pissy mood no doubt still simmering over his threat in the car while waiting on her friends to arrive. She looked around the mall with her arms folded over her chest. Mayber her stupid little "friends" had abandoned her and wouldn't show up after all. Then they could both just go home and he could concentrate on trying to ring up Mandy again.

Billy was reading all the signs around him until he finally found the Scoops Ahoy! parlor sign and with a confident smirk on his face he strutted over there. He had no idea Mandy and her blonde chatty friend Nikki were within the same vicinity and walked right past them distracted and determined to flirt up the girl behind the counter while taking satisfactory chunks out of Steve's ego.

He stood behind a short line of customers with his hands resting in his pockets while waiting to torment Steve for a bit. He tried not to laugh already just seeing the ridiculous sailor outfit he was stuck wearing. Looking up at the menu at the prices he thought about getting a little something seeing how bad Steve was at making things at the counter.

Turning to the display freezer he saw the blond girl, evidently Steve's co worker in her own uniform, was busy restocking napkins, ice cream toppings, and other needful things while Harrington took orders making what the patrons wanted and serving them. She had to keep stopping what she was doing periodically to talk him through it and sometimes having to show him how to operate the register or how to make certain selections from the menu but he couldn't seem to keep up. He was really bad at it and a few of the kids took their cones from him then cried or whined while parents complained about his miserable attempts at preparing their food.

He apologized timidly to them over and over and was getting overwhelmed merely trying to hand them back the proper change even dropping some of it while making nervous small talk. He had to remake some of the orders entirely from scratch with the girls help just to calm the kids and their angry families who were saying they wanted to speak to management. Eventually they were satisfied and left the parlor shaking their heads and taking their seats in the dining area or going on with their day at the mall.

Billy was putting his hand to his mouth as in a thoughtful pose and grinning behind his fingers with his eyebrow up watching Steve crash and burn at his job.

At the far end of the parlor Mandy was just finishing up her second mint chocolate chip this time in a paper Scoops cup and not on a waffle cone. She was licking her spoon absentmindedly like a little kid not really paying attention to anything in particular. Nikki watched as Mandy cleaned her spoon up then put it in the cup finally meeting her eyes.

"What? Do I have some ice cream on my face?" She began wiping at her mouth and nose just in case but didn't feel anything sticky or see any on her hands.

"What?" She repeated again and Nikki cracked up smiling at her.

"Mandy, are you sure you still have your V-card? The way you were workin' that spoon you might give some poor old guy a heart attack while watching you."

Nikki laughed as Mandy blushed furiously at her comment not liking her to say such a personal thing like that about her out loud around other people that could hear.

"Nikki! God, please don't say that out loud! It's embarrassing, okay?"

"There's nothing embarrassing about being a... virgin... or being great with ones mouth, Mandy darling. Trust me, I would know. Used to know." She corrected herself because she lost hers a long time ago and had told Mandy all about it one night during their sleepover. She had been somewhat grossed out by it but fascinated all the same and decided she could wait her turn on it really not being in any rush to go through that.

Nikki laughed lightly again at how shy Mandy was being but nodded promising to stop saying the V word out loud from now on. She winked at her and began digging through her bags checking out some of the perfumes and body sprays she had purchased asking Mandy's opinion on which one she thought would be best for tonight.

"Okay... so which one do you think I should wear? Here, check this one out."

She spritzed a light spray of it in the air for her to smell and she began coughing.

"No... not that one. Oh, wow. That is strong." Mandy's eyes were watering a little bit and Nikki waved it away as best as she could while apologizing.

"Alrighty. So, not the Lavender Lotus. Check. Okay, how about this one?"

She sprayed another one above their heads and Mandy gave it a sniff and nodded.

"Yeah, that one's really nice. What's it called?" Nikki handed her the bottle.

"Warm Vanilla and Honey. It's actually one of my favorites. You can borrow it sometime if you would like. I have plenty others to choose from and I basically got the vanilla for you. It suits you perfectly, considering."

She grinned nodding making a crack at her innocence with the term 'vanilla' and Mandy had no idea what she meant by that but she graciously accepted and put it in her book bag. She really did like how it smelled but she would put a lighter spraying of it on herself so it wasn't so overpowering.

As she was tucking it away she happened to glance over to see if Steve and Robin were busy so they could say goodbye and end their break to go back to shopping. That's when she ducked her head down behind her bag and noticing her reaction Nikki turned to look.

"What the heck is Billy doing here? With a body like that, practically not an ounce of fat on him, you'd think he wouldn't come to an ice cream place let alone eat any of it." Nikki pondered on this and noticed Mandy cowering trying to hide.

"Oh, Mandy, really. Sweetie, just straighten up and ignore him. You're going to have to try and get a thicker skin around him,



especially if you both wind up at the party tonight. I'm almost positive he is going to be there. Might as well start practicing now. I can't believe you gave him your phone number. Why did you do that if you're so adamant about not wanting anything to do with him?"

"I don't know, Nikki. I don't know what I was thinking. I wasn't thinking. I mean he was just so sweet last night and when he asked it just kind of happened."

"Did you kiss him yet? Did he kiss you? Anything?" Nikki asked watching her pathetically continue to hide from him while she was asking her to keep her voice down so as not to draw attention to them sitting there.

Mandy wouldn't answer directly. She just looked down and blushed. Nikki made a shocked face and suddenly got excited.

"Oh my god. You did, didn't you? Mandy, was that your first kiss?"

"Be quiet, Nikki. Okay, let's just sneak out of here and go home. I don't want him to see me. And I swear if you tell anyone about this I will never forgive you."

Nikki wasn't paying attention anymore. She was far too busy checking out Billy's fine butt in his dark blue jeans and eyeing him up and down. Mandy couldn't help but peek from behind the bag and look either.

His broad strong shoulders, torso, and his biceps looked amazing in his white muscle shirt. He wasn't wearing any jacket today at all to evidently show his body off even more. She noticed a lot of girls looking and not just Nikki.

Mandy looked back to her friend who was almost drooling zoning out over it and began rolling her eyes at her and sighing. Did Billy even own any loose clothes that fit him a little better or wear any other pants besides tight denim?

Nikki snapped back to her friend seeing she was irritated that she wasn't paying attention due to watching Billy.

"Yeah, I'm looking at it. So sue me." Her friend said playfully and

before anything more could be said they both noticed that Billy wasn't just here for ice cream. He was here for Steve and his main goal was to pick on him.

They watched as Billy took his turn at the front of the line and leaned up against the counter talking to him. They saw the annoyed look on their Steve's face and the clueless one on Robin's.

"What are you doing here, amigo?" Steve said to him glaring slightly. He removed the hat and chucked it behind him not wanting to give Billy the full effect of seeing him in his work uniform.

"I would ask the same thing about you but I already knew you would be here. Word got around you were working here. I just thought I'd come stop by and check it out for myself and give a friendly little hello."

"I know you. Friendly isn't in your dictionary. What do you want?"

It was obvious what he wanted. He wanted to mock his outfit and shame him. Billy ignored his question and grinned at Robin giving her a wink. She didn't react at all and simply stood there hoping she didn't have to break up a fight between them.

"A little too early for Halloween, isn't it Harrington? What are you supposed to be anyway, the Pillsbury Doughboy?"

Billy fired at him giving a slight chuckle. Steve looked a little red in the face and was glaring at him with Robin looking between the two of them back and forth.

Despite Robin clearly picking up on the fact that they were enemies, that broke her a little bit, and although she tried hard not to laugh she gave a small breathy giggle. Billy was flicking the bowtie on Steve's collar as he said it adding to the effect. Steve looked at Robin as if she had stabbed him in the back and she instantly stopped and mouthed an apology to him.

"You gonna buy something or not? Keep pushing me Hargrove and you'll get nada. Company policy says I can reserve the right to refuse service to dickheads."

Robin made a face like she was impressed with Steve standing up for himself but she noticed Billy's intimidating irritated face. She decided then and there she didn't like the guy one bit.

"Okay, children, how about we just simmer down now. Order something and I'll make it."

She shoved Steve to the side and told him to go in the back and get more items to restock while she handled this. Steve eyed Billy sizing him up as he smirked at him and hesitantly did as he was told going into the back room. Robin turned back to Billy and was all business.

"I guess you need a woman to fight your battles for you, Harrington. Maybe next time then. See you at the party, King Steve!"

Steve flipped him off before going through the door to do what Robin requested glad to be rid of him. He laughed knowing he was still in because they still had a deal. All that beer and liquor he brought over to his house for tonight was still his ticket in and Steve wouldn't back down or he would risk being counted as dishonorable should he and his group spread that around the school. Unlike Billy, Steve seemed to be a guy of his word.

"Party?" Robin lifted one brow.

"Wanna come, darlin'?" Billy winked at her playfully.

"Oh, the party at Steve's? No. He already invited me but I turned it down. Not my scene."

"That's too bad. I bet you and I could have a lot of fun. You look like the kind of girl who's uptight until she gets a few drinks in her and then lets the wild cat out of the bag."

Robin was not amused but she stood there and took his order. He was still trying to flirt with her but it bounced off of her effortlessly and it was clear Billy had a hard time understanding why. After he got his order, he hollared goodbye to "Sailor Steve" and began walking out of the parlor tossing the paid for but useless ice cream in the trash can.

Before he turned around walking in their direction, Mandy had convinced Nikki to leave with her while he was distracted at the

counter. They were trying to walk away when suddenly he noticed for the first time that she was there.

His blood began to get fired up due to not fully being over her ignoring his calls. Yet here she was, shopping with a friend at the mall, the very mall he had wanted to take her to. Somewhat angry he jogged up beside them walking with Mandy and trying to get her to stop and talk to him.

"Mandy! Wait up. I tried to call you today but your line just kept ringing off the hook. Are you avoiding me?"

There was almost hurt in his voice and in his eyes as she turned around to look into them. She lowered her eyes sighing not really wanting to deal with this right now.

"I... uhh. Umm. I was busy. I'm sorry." Mandy kept staring at the floor not meeting his eyes anymore as she made up excuses. She knew she was actively dodging him again.

"I don't buy that. I called at least five or six times. I was hoping we could hang out today and maybe even spend some time here. Tommy and Carol told me about the place and I had to bring Maxine here anyway so I figured you could ride with us."

Thinking back on his discussion with Max in the car he was rather thankful that didn't happen.

"Kind of funny that I wind up running into you here anyway. Doesn't seem like you're so busy at all. I'll ask again. Are you purposefully avoiding me?"

His voice was a bit more firm and he was trying to take her chin in his hand to lift her face gently to him so she would look him in his eyes. He wanted a straight answer.

Mandy dodged his touch and looked at him on her own. She got upset at this badgering even when knowing he was right. She wasn't busy she was with a friend trying to forget about him and the kiss they had shared. To put him out of her mind for today and have fun.

And hearing the way he was ripping Steve apart at the counter back

there absolutely confirmed her suspicions that he was merely putting on a nice guy act with her last night in front of her parents and outside when saying goodnight to her. He was being an ass again and still up to his old ways. Billy Hargrove was not going to change. Not for himself. Not for her. Not for anyone.

Nikki waved to him when he mentioned her but when Mandy shot her a look for doing it she decided to walk ahead and let them be to hash it out. Mandy was clearly pissed off at him and put on the spot.

Turning back to Billy she had a stern defiant look on her face. He saw that lovely fire in her eyes and it stirred him making him think of their night together and how it felt to hold her and press his lips to her neck. How it felt to graze her lips softly with his own. How dizzy her lovely smell had made him. And he also noticed how she smelled like a mix of lavender and vanilla right now. She smelled so sweet although the scent was a little strong.

He tried to move closer to her but she wouldn't let him approach.

"You're mad at me. Why?" He searched her lovely green eyes and waited for her to answer.

"Why? Because you are acting like a complete jerk, Hargrove. Yeah, I'm mad at you. Mad that everytime you come around and show you can be sweet and gentle and real, you backslide into your old ways and become an ass again. I heard how you were treating Steve up there at the Scoops counter. You were ripping on him for being a man, having a job, making money, and being responsible. You have no idea how hard he is trying."

"He's a little rich boy with wealthy parents. How hard could he possibly have to try for anything?" Billy shot back and she glared at him.

"Rich people have problems too, Billy. And he's not rich... his parents are. His parents are barely there for him and even if they have money, they are making him find his own way in this world. You can't always judge someone by their wealth or appearances, okay?"

He somewhat scoffed at that. People judged him constantly by his

appearances. He wasn't saying they were wrong just that they assumed. But no one invited him over to their house like Mandy did. No one asked him to spend time getting to know them or their family. It was Mandy who apparently saw something more in him and he had no idea why.

He liked to fight and get into trouble. He liked to act out and let loose going wild once in a while and to party. But Mandy made him feel as if there was more to him than all that. Still, Billy stepped back a bit and listened to her let it all out. He was quiet taking it all in.

"You have a job, Billy, so you know what it's like. You have to wear a specific uniform to work there too. But just because his isn't like yours and is a little bit..."

"Stupid? Dorky?" Billy smirked at her trying to win her over with humor and trying to get her to lighten up. He got a serious face again when she didn't laugh or smile and he sighed.

"I was going to say different or eccentric. Unique even, maybe unconventional? But there you go again. This is exactly what I am talking about. You're better than this. So why do you act like this?"

She shook her head and turned from him walking towards the fountain. She didn't see that Max was sitting there. As soon as Max saw them talking she got wide eyed and ran around to hide behind one of the tropical bushes and trees near the benches and watched listening in while hidden. She had hoped neither one of them noticed her sitting there just moments before. She breathed a sigh of relief that they were so wrapped up in arguing with one another they hadn't.

"What? Are you telling me you don't find it a little funny yourself. You were there in the diner and obviously got ice cream so surely you saw him. You telling me you didn't laugh?"

He grinned a little bit at her and she knew he had a point. She couldn't deny that her, Nikki, and Robin had all been making fun of him a little bit for it.

"No, I'm not denying it. I admit we laughed and teased him a little.

But... that's different. Steve is our friend. He knows us. And he knows we don't mean anything by it and that we are just playing with him. But you..." She trailed off and couldn't finish her sentence.

"But me, what? I'm not allowed to consider him a friend? What if I do? In my own little way. Sort of. Okay, no, you're right, Harrington and I are not friends. We don't really like one another. To be honest, I could have said or done worse to him. I was just playing around too."

Billy was being defensive but getting more frustrated with her by the second while trying to maintain and argue for his innocence. Mandy sighed but stood there with her hand on her hip.

Billy groaned. This conversation was a waste of time. He wanted to talk about their kiss and about taking her out to the party. Not sitting here discussing pretty boy's feelings.

Mandy huffed when he was trying to relate his actions with her and her friend's actions. Clearly she thought he was a real piece of shit for having a little bit of fun with Harrington when they both had done the same. It was slightly hypocritical.

"Look, it doesn't matter. I'm sorry, alright? But you still haven't answered my question. Were you avoiding me? And if so... when will you stop avoiding me so I can finally just take you out? Just the two of us? I don't think that's too much to ask, is it?"

He once more moved in close and took her hands in his this time not asking or offering but simply grabbing them gently and holding them there. She looked up into his blue eyes feeling herself begin to get lost in them again like last night.

"A you kidding me? You insult my friend Steve, talk me into giving you my first kiss, hound me day and night almost since the beginning of school, flirt with and hit on Robin, who just so happens to be into girls by the way, and you want me to go with you on a date?"

Out of all of that, Billy heard the comment about Robin stand out the most. It clicked in his head and suddenly he understood why she had looked at him funny and didn't jump on his offer or flirt back. It made total sense now. Just his luck to hit on a lesbian. And if not a

lesbian, than just his luck to want the one girl he seemingly couldn't have, which had nothing to do with her gender preference at all.

"I thought it was weird when she wasn't so responsive to me. Oh well. Not like I really meant anything by it. Just me having fun and trying to recruit more people for Harrington's party. Is that so wrong?"

He shrugged and she was beside herself at how he could be so two faced and make excuses for everything he did or said not feeling wrong or even the least bit bad about it.

Mandy sighed still looking at him but she didn't say no or pull her hands away. Clearly she was still considering it so Billy waited patiently for her anger to die down a little bit.

"Look, I honestly wasn't planning on sleeping with her, Mandy, and since she's gay I doubt it would have happened anyway. I was just having my fun, that's all. I haven't changed my mind about wanting to spend time with you, Mandy.

"You act the same way about Tina. You don't care who's heart you break so long as you have your fun with them. Another reason I've been trying to get you to leave me alone and stay away from you."

He grimaced at her bringing up Tina. Now she would most likely tack Robin onto reasons why she was upset with him in addition to her.

Nikki was amused hearing all of this while standing a little ways off from where they were. She was seated at one of the wooden benches and patiently waiting for their lover's quarrel to be over with and resolved. She was smirking but not saying a word letting Mandy handle this.

Max was still listening in as well from her hiding spot and had to stop herself from making any noise while cupping her mouth. She almost laughed because of the comical way Mandy was tearing Billy a new one over his bad behaviors.

She really was starting to like Mandy more and more and for the first time ever she was seeing just how she was able to miraculously keep him in line, even making him apologize which is something he



NEVER did. Not for anyone. She waited to see how this would end.

"So then you have been avoiding me."

Billy sighed getting his answer finally. She was pushing him away and he could admit some of it had been his fault. But yet, a lot of it was also hers too. If she would just open up to him and stop running away...

"Yes." She said softly.

"Why?" He said equally just as softly to her.

"I don't know. I just don't feel like I can trust you. For one, you hit on everything that walks and is female. For another you switch moods on a dime. One moment you're sweet and gentle and the next you're angry and cruel. What if I go out with you and you suddenly shift your mood on me? It's not something I want to risk. And furthermore, it's not me you should be apologizing to. You should march back over there and say sorry to Steve."

His jaw almost dropped when she told him that. He was in shock and obviously not too keen on the idea. Before he could interrupt and say anything she continued holding up her hand to him pointing one finger.

"Do this, and I might consider it. You could at least make it up to him considering how you treated him on the court in gym class. You were terrible to him and you need to understand he is my friend. I won't accept you being like that to him or any of my other friends."

Billy gave her a stone cold stare. She wanted him to apologize? To Harrington? Just to take her out on a date? Fuck.

"I don't see that happening, princess. In fact, I know it won't. I said it to you. Can't you just be satisfied with that?"

"No. Then I don't see our date happening. Now, if you will excuse me, I have to go home and get ready for my friend's pool party. You know, the one you insulted? I wouldn't be surprised if he won't even let you go now that you've humiliated him twice. Goodbye, Billy."

With that she tore her hands away from his rather angrily and spun on her heels telling Nikki it was time for them to go. Nikki stood up grabbing her bags and walked out with her shooting Billy a strange but sad look.

Billy grumbled behind her but made no effort to follow her outside. He was far too angry at her shooting him down and still reeling from her rejection. He was pissed off about the ridiculous stipulation she tried to put on him. He wouldn't admit it but he was crushed at her words and her denial of him over someone like Steve Harrington.

All he wanted to do was show her a good time and she was blocking him at every turn. Did it really mean that much to her to give a stupid apology to Steve that she would not allow him to take her out on a date over it?

Growling low in his throat he lifted his hands in the air for a moment and then stormed off. He got no satisfaction out of today or their meeting and wasn't in the mood anymore to hangout with her or Tommy and Carol. He would just go home and try to think of some way to get her trust back. To convince her to spend time with him.

He had to try and get her to warm up to him and he resolved that he should no longer piss off Steve or antagonize him until she could get over it and stop being so sore about it. It was the only way short of having to apologize to Harrington that he could see to make it up to her.

Hopefully she would cool off in the next few hours because he still wanted her to go with him and he would do his very best to be the nice guy she wanted him to be just so she would. He wasn't going to give up just yet.

As for Tina and Robin, well he could easily leave Robin alone. But Tina would have to be dealt with eventually and he wasn't sure how to let her down and tell her he was moving on without hurting her. She was a popular girl. That could potentially cause waves in the group he was fitting in with.

He would think of something but for now he would put it on the bottom of the list he was mentally making notes of. A long checklist

of ways to please Mandy so she would stop running from him and would just let him get closer to her. He hoped she was worth all of this trouble. Deep down he knew she was. She had to be.

He went out to the lot to sit and wait out the few hours that Max would be in the mall with her friends. Hopefully she was already with them getting shit done so they could leave long before seven and supper time at Neil's. He needed time to get ready for the party and to confront Mandy trying to patch things up and smoothe things over with her

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Once Billy, Mandy, and the other girl left, Max came out of hiding from behind the bushes. She had listened to the entire exchange and suddenly Billy's talking in his sleep about her was making more and more sense the more she thought about it. The pieces were falling into place. Billy could hide it from Mandy and others but he couldn't hide from Max that he truly liked this girl. He wanted to be around her and take her places. He was even willing to put up with her being angry with him.

When he apologized to her Max's jaw almost hit the floor. It wasn't like him at all. When she thought about all the pining he did in his sleep over her and how often he had been saying her name it was clear that this was more than just being about him wanting to sleep with her like he did all the other girls. He actually had feelings for her.

Mandy was changing him and making him realize that he couldn't just treat people however he wanted to and get away with it. That there were consequences to his actions. It was something he never learned because neither Neil nor anyone else had ever really checkmated him and made him step back to realize all the horrible things he was saying and doing.

Mandy had this way of shining a spotlight on him and making him hold himself accountable. She wasn't stupid either and was not letting him run all over her. She admired her and hoped that Billy would listen and learn from her. Maybe take a hint and stop being such a jerk seeing it would get him no where with her.

She wasn't rooting for Billy so much as she was for Mandy possibly helping to make Billy see he needed to make some changes in his life. She knew the deep dark roots he came from and about a lot of his painful past. Even his painful present because of Neil. But those were excuses and he needed to rise above them. He needed to grow the hell up. It was clear Mandy was trying to get him to see that.

Max frowned really hoping that The Party kids would bother to show up today. Because today was supposed to be the day she would meet El for the first time and her friends would come up with the verdict on whether or not she was to join their group permanently and become an official Party Member. They had been going back and forth about it for weeks now and it was getting on her nerves that they couldn't seem to make up their mind. They had said they wanted to wait for El to meet Max and cast in her vote.

"Max! Hey, Max! We're over here!" Suddenly the sound of her friends calling to her snapped her out of her thoughts and she turned in the direction of their voices.

"Madmax! Come meet El! Come on, we have to get to the arcade!" She grinned seeing Dustin, Lucas, Mike, Will, and the new girl that was with them, apparently El, all standing over by the escalators.

She waved to them and grabbed her skateboard running over to them and held out her hand to shake with El.

"Hi, El. I'm Madmax but you can call me Max. Nice to meet you. I've heard so much about you."

El looked at her hand for a moment with a small bit of uncertainty in her eyes. But she shyly put her own hand out and took Max's shaking it.

"Hi. Nice to meet you, Max." Her speech was slow and soft but she was kind and gave Max a gentle smile.

"We're going to be great friends too, El. I just know it. Alright, stalkers. Where is this new arcade? I'm dying to bust out some high scores."

Max grinned at El and winked and then El returned the wink. They hooked their arms together and followed the boys of The Party as they lead the way chattering excitedly towards the huge new Arcade, even bigger and better than the Plaza Arcade and three times as big.

"I didn't get much of a haul this time, guys." Dustin said with his slight lisp clearly agitated that he didn't get enough quarters.

"That's okay, you can share mine with me." Will Byers offered politely and Dustin smiled, his eyes crinkling up happily, as he put his arm around Will's shoulders.

"Sweet, dude, thanks for having my back. I owe you one."

"More like you owe him five bucks worth. He split with you last time." Mike teased and Lucas laughed at this.

"Yeah, Dustin, you should just get a job and work hard earning a real man's wages. Like I do. I mow lawns for Old Man Humphrey and a lot of people on my block and I make bank over it. Way more than any puny haul you could get from your mom's couch cushions."

Lucas beamed and Max looked impressed at the fact that he had a job at his age.

Dustin looked at him wide eyed not wanting him to out him for that in front of Max, whom he clearly had a crush on since the first day she arrived in their class at school.

"Sonofabitch, Lucas, I told you not to mention that. Come on, man, you're embarrassing me."

He tried to grin at Max to smooth over what she heard and she simply turned to laugh with El as the boys competed over who had more quarters while going up the escalator.

"It's hard work but it beats stealing from your sister like Mike did to Nancy."

"I didn't steal it! For the last time, I BORROWED it. I'm going to pay her back, I swear!"

Mike said defensively and the entire group responded with a long drawn out "sure" as a response.

Their debate raged on the entire walk to the arcade but beating them at their high scores and earning her keep with them would be worth it. She wanted to prove herself to them and join their group. Hopefully they would deem her worthy and make a decision before the day was over.

She never wanted it to end because despite her knowing Billy was slowly learning and changing, he was going to be a miserable ass to deal with in the car since he was shot down by Mandy in the mall today.

She frowned remembering his threat and looking to all her close friends. She could never let him or his bully friends hurt any of them. She wanted to help and tell Mandy the truth but to do so would be to break her word to her step brother and risk her friend's safety.

The two of them would just have to figure it out on their own and hopefully soon so all this back and forth moody crap between them could die down. It was annoying and whenever he was upset over Mandy he tended to take it out on her more often. She hoped they could fix things and finally be able to just admit their feelings for one another to spare herself and her friend's the misery.

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## **10. Ground Rules - The Arrangement**

**0 BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

### **GROUND RULES - THE ARRANGEMENT**

**(STEVE'S POOL PARTY PART 1)**

#### **Summary:**

While mentally preparing herself for Steve's pool party, Mandy tries to think of ways to get out of it. She really does not want to run into Billy there. If he were to flirt with her, it would break Tina's heart who has her sights set on him. Why does he keep stringing her along if he has an interest in her? It's a terrible thing to do...

After speaking with Nikki about pickup arrangements, Mandy receives an unexpected visitor wanting to make a deal with her. Will she take the deal? If she does, ground rules must be set or the deal is off.

**NOTE:** This is a rather long part of the story so I may need to break up the pool party chapter into a 3 or 4 part. Sorry there

is just so much going on.

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Mandy had thought about a million different reasons and excuses to try and get out of going to the pool party. It would really upset Nikki, Alex, and Tucker if she went back on her word. But she had a terrible feeling that if she went, she would just run into Mr Ego, surnamed "His Royal Hotness", and be unmercifully subjected to his unbidden attention.

Laying in her bed looking at her ceiling all she could think of was how dangerously close and blatantly comfortable Billy was getting with her. Way too familiar for her own peace of mind. He literally had no respect for the opposite sex when it came to unwanted touching, nuzzling, and putting his eyes and hands all over them, despite how they might try to fight him off. If they even wanted to, that is.

To be fair she did cuddle into him on the couch but she thought that was all that would happen. She had been stupid and naive. Lord knows she had tried to push him away many times and only managed to get away from him very few of those times. At her locker. In the gym. And now the night before on her very own couch to the point where he finally wore her down so bad with his eyes and mouth that he got her to consent to kissing him before he left. How could she have let that happen?

Other girls loved his attention on them falling over themselves stupidly for him as if they didn't have any common sense. Girls like Tina and Carol and his new lifeguard co worker, whoever she was.

Even Nancy Wheeler's mom and the ladies at the pool that were her friends and that was just super gross in a way she didn't want to think about. She shared Nancy's freaked out reaction to that and felt bad for her as well. Thankfully her own mother was not making bedroom eyes back at him despite him clearly charming her.

He even had her best friend Nikki drooling over him. It shocked Mandy that even Nikki was sprung over him even if she never dared approach him to flirt with him or try to hook up with him. She acted



as if Billy was Mandy's territory constantly pushing her to approach or talk to him.

Seeing how the other girls wanted him she felt like the exception to this for some strange reason. She absolutely hated him coming around her and did everything she could to show him that but he still didn't back down. He didn't take the hint. Or maybe he just didn't want to. That upset her even more about him.

The way he followed her at the pool made her more than fed up enough with his persistence and yet he still managed to convince her to invite him over for a "date". She thought she was playing it smart but evidently not. She gave her first kiss to him and although she had swooned in her room after it was quickly replaced with fear of him. She would give him NO MORE handouts of herself to him no matter what from now on.

She was powerless when cornered by Billy or froze completely when he loomed over her locking her in his sights. She was often unable to resist his charming behavior no matter how perverted or out of line they could be to the point she wanted to beg her parents to allow her to change schools just to get away from him.

He wasn't all bad boy though. That was his cover. She saw more to him than meets the eye not too long ago and it confused the hell out of her. She saw how good he was to Calvin. How gentle he was on the couch with her.

Thinking back on their night together once her parents went to bed, Mandy had seen a gentler and more easygoing side of him that night as they talked about the Romeo and Juliet film. He brought up amazing points and had thoroughly enjoyed the films they watched together.

He had even kept his gaze respectful but she chalked that up to her father putting him in his place. But when they were alone even then all he did was attempt to kiss her and nuzzle into her neck. She would be lying if she said it hadn't felt good. That he didn't smell wonderful. That the feel of his hand on her arm and wrapped around her shoulder didn't make her feel so comfortable and safe with him. And that was EXACTLY the problem.

Sighing and messing with the edges of her newest romance novel she picked up at the bookstore in the Starcourt Mall earlier, she suddenly had recalled the way his fingertips and his mouth on her skin had felt the night before.

Recalled his husky breathing and low gravelly voice in her ear when he moaned softly most likely just to mess with her while they were so close in the livingroom. It made her struggle to catch her breath while trying to focus right now on her book as if he were right next to her and still doing it.

Flashes of those memories ran through her head. She couldn't decide if the breathy way he talked to her during the movies and the sounds he made in her ear while grazing his lips along her neck was out of his instinctual need and desire for her or if he was playing with her just to wind her up. Was his touch and interest genuine or just a ploy to be her undoing and then tell all his friends about it to make fun of her? Had he actually spread those horrible disgusting things about her and lied about it?

What about her hesitation she felt at him touching her face holding her chin? Had she really wanted him to stop? Did she really mean to consent to that kiss? She couldn't tell anymore. The lines were blurring but she half heartedly almost wanted to get to know him more from what she saw of him last night. Meaning his mind, his heart, his feelings, not his body, as beautiful as it was.

His words and actions with her at school had angered her along with his disrespect for her boundaries earning him a week of the silent treatment. But his body, hands, and mouth had spoken volumes in a language easily recognizeable that called to her in a strangely heated way. He had made her own body answer to him against her will and he barely did anything to her at all. It could have been worse. Could have gone further...

It had been intense between them every time he looked at her in the hallway or tried to trap her up against her locker. Because he seemed to only focus on one thing at first: practicing his familiarity of every inch of her body with his dangerous blue eyes if he couldn't use his hands.

He had stared at her all over in such a way that it made her want to scream for him to turn his eyeballs inside out and stop looking at her. Picturing that made her give a small giggle but she stopped herself and frowned thinking about the power behind those eyes of his.

He knew what those baby blues did to her and he used them like hormonal manipulative headlights illuminating her all over and lighting her up from the inside. She imagined those eyes got him in and out of all kinds of trouble off and on in his life.

Who knew that he could turn a seemingly innocent and harmless movie night gathering into an excuse to fanagle a kiss out of her, no matter how soft and gentle it had been? Give him enough time and she was sure his kisses would get more urgent. More forceful perhaps.

Without realizing it she was fanning herself with her book and getting mad at the reaction he caused simply over her thinking of him she put it down on her bed.

She thought of how he walked down the hall every time he grinned at her having tried to get a rise out of her. With the way he moved it was clear he was confident in his sex appeal and skills in the area of seducing a girl.

His downfall was he was entirely too focused on her and all her weak points and less so the his own English class. If he wasn't careful he would fall behind and start getting bad marks. Then it wouldn't matter if he was good at Basketball or set for college with it.

The night they cuddled on the couch he was trying so hard to push his mouth to hers even desperate enough to settle for kissing along her throat. But once she put her foot down, had asserted herself a little bit although weakly with a little help from her dad being a nosy spy on them, he had finally backed off and went back to enjoying the movie with her. Mandy couldn't believe he even had a notion of restraint.

She could also tell he was slightly frustrated about it, too. He had so much pent up sexual desire towards her that she could feel it from across every room he entered that she happened to also be in. Could feel it burning hot behind her as he sat in his desk trying to whisper

flirtations to her asking her out on dates with him. Everyday he came up with a new location he could take her in order to tempt her into going with him but she had resisted proudly and stayed silent.

He had this quiet intensity to him even when he wasn't snappy in class, cursing like a sailor around campus and in the hallways, or picking fights with people on the school grounds and putting his fists up to challenge whomever he was pissed off with at the time for whatever reason.

She saw his cruelty to Steve Harrington on the court. It really had pissed her off to see him mocking and harrassing him again even in his own workplace and all because of a work uniform! And when he refused to apologize to him for it, that had been the LAST straw helping her decide to not give him the time of day.

He should have apologized. He should have cared. But she guessed deep down he really didn't. Everyone was a potential joke to him and no one's feelings counted for anything. Mandy had even seen him make fun of some students in their shared class making the other kids laugh about it and feeling proud of himself for it.

And yet he never dared lip off to his father Neil. That seemed to be his limit. Neil was like a bigger version of Billy and it seemed it was a line that he would not cross. She noticed it the night of the welcome dinner when he had tried to belittle him in front of her family and his although pretty discreetly and calmly. Billy didn't say a word. He didn't defend himself. He just sat and took it and ignored it. Why?

Mandy was angry and pent up too but always at him for teasing her, stalking her, making her feel small and weak and preyed upon by his eyes all over her anatomy. She wasn't herself around him, more flighty and mousey than usual, and felt completely strange in her reactions to him or how she carried herself when he was near her.

And when he had put his mouth on her throat last night that was definitely a frightening experience. Her breath was sucked out of her when the feel of his lips and tongue traced along her pulse.

It made her skin ripple with pleasurable defiant goosebumps and set her on edge with an insane desire she had never thought could well

up inside of her for anyone. It was strange fire... and she was playing with it. She invited him. She had brought that on. He was igniting that flame, and despite her knowing better, she was letting him and adding fuel to it. If she didn't stop it would consume them both and more mistakes would be made that she would regret for the rest of her life.

Deep in thought, the phone rang in her room and she rolled over to pick it up. It was Nikki asking her if she was still going to the party. Her voice was eager in wanting to confirm that Mandy wasn't backing out on the plan, Billy being present or not.

*God, please, if you can spare me, don't let him be there. Let him go out with Tina somewhere and not show up.*

She begged silently in her head, her last prayer she would ever ask of God if He would just help her maintain her dignity and be free of Hargrove for ONE night. A whole week of him stalking her had been enough. She was getting worn thin over it.

"So... Mandy... the pool party? Want me to come pick you up at around six?"

Nikki practically shouted it over the phone in her excitement. Mandy gave a helpless sigh while smirking at her friend over the line. How could she say no to that and break her poor friend's heart? A promise was a promise.

"Six is fine, Nikki. Is Alex going to be there?"

She twirled the phone cord around her fingers and smiled moving over to her window sitting on the ledge and looking out at the sun setting in the sky through the blinds. Her eyes wandered across the street, she tried so hard to stop them, but they rested on the blue Camaro and scanned to see if he was outside.

He wasn't but he was most likely home doing whatever it is he did at home or watching the small redheaded girl. Maybe until his parents came home to possibly allow him his freedom for the night so he could go party and fool around with girls. Like Tina. Mandy rolled her eyes at constantly thinking about them together. Why did it

matter?

*Well, Mandy... it matters because he kissed you while seeing her, stupid! That means either he cheated on her with you and you're the other woman... or she is the Mistress and you are the stupid girl that actually cares for him!*

She fought that thought and grumbled at the very idea. She was NOT jealous. She did NOT care.

Still looking out to their driveway she saw his father's Ford truck wasn't in the driveway but Susan's car was. It was officially the weekend so most likely Neil wasn't at work just out with his wife Susan somewhere she guessed unless she was home too.

*What are you spying on them now? You got nothing better to do, Hawkins? Are you that messed up inside that you are becoming a complete peeping tom now?*

She made herself mad just scolding herself about it. Looking away from their house closing her blinds all the way she sat down on her bed trying to pay better attention to her friend instead of getting sidetracked.

"Yeah, totally. I'm giving Alex a lift too so I will swing by and get him before I get you."

She could hear her chewing her gum even over the phone and gave a soft laugh. Nikki always had things so well planned out. Everything on schedule everything to the minute detail.

"Okay that sounds good. So I guess I will see you soon then? I'll go ahead and get ready."

She heard Nikki shout at her little brothers in the background.

"Is... is Tucker going to be there?" She couldn't help but ask. He had been on her mind since their big argument in her room. The big argument that Billy even had a hand in causing. If he had just stayed away from her and not talked bad about her to all the boys in school, making it get around to Tucker, that whole thing most likely could have been avoided or handled better.

Mandy tried hard to stop thinking about the two boys tormenting her but it was practically impossible.

"Yeah, he will be too. But not riding with me. Tucker has his own car so he said he will drive over himself. I gave him the directions."

The mention of Tucker's name made Mandy's heart ache. All she remembered was his pain, his tears welling up in his eyes, and his hurt and anger when he put himself out to her and she had denied him not feeling the same.

Tucker could NEVER find out Mandy kissed Billy. It would KILL him. If Billy talked about last night whether at the party or in school, even so much as breathing a single word of it to anyone, she would hunt him down herself and most likely die while attempting to knock him out with her own bare fists.

Frowning she wondered how she would be able to talk to Tucker tonight. If he ignored her at the party she wouldn't blame him. Their friendship had been rocky ever since he had climbed through her window that night to confess his feelings for her and bite back his anger at Billy constantly being all over her in school.

It didn't matter that she had explained to Tucker that she wanted nothing to do with Hargrove and was trying to get him to leave her alone. He was still jealous. He was in pain. He couldn't have her and it killed a part of him inside, as well as a part of their friendship. And now that she had invited Billy over and shared something intimate with him she never intended to, her guilt was eating her alive over it each time she replayed it in her head.

Even more infuriating than Billy stalking her at school was the fact that Tucker had told her that he had been talking about her with the guys in gym and how he had plans to "ruin her" her and take her out eventually to have his way with her. Had Billy really said those horrible things about her to all the guys as Tucker had claimed he did?

He was so convincing at the Hawkins pool that he didn't but now she was second guessing it. He had tried to make his move on her last night on the couch and wound up succeeding a kiss before the night

was over anyway. Even making her rethink allowing him to take her out on an official date. Why was she allowing this to happen?

*Fat chance, Billy. Never in a million years. You had your kiss now you can piss off.*

Mandy hated his arrogant nature and how cocky he was. The fact that he was even talking about taking her out to do things with her on assumption that she would say yes and go along with it was humiliating enough and very presumptuous of him.

She rolled her eyes at imagining him talking her into going ANYWHERE with someone like him where he could get more than just a kiss. Let him talk and run his mouth. The important thing would be that SHE would know it never happened or that it never would.

*Damn me. I really need to just stay away from him. That's it. No more!*

She would simply go right back to ignoring him just like she did all week starting with the pool party at Steve's and shut him out completely again. If he came to her house she would slam the door in his face. If he tried to approach her she would run away like she did all the other boys and hide from him. Enough was enough.

As if reading her thoughts Nikki talked about the very person plaguing her own.

"Mandy, I have no idea if Billy will be there tonight but the rumor is he will be and so will Tina if he is. I just wanted to give you a heads up. Are you sure you are okay with this? You never did tell me what happened last night between you two, well besides the first kiss, but I assumed if you didn't want to talk about it then it was pretty bad so I didn't push. Today at the mall you made it very clear you were pissed with him. Did he do something bad last night?"

Nikki said considerately to her over the line with a soft and concerned voice. She was wanting to know more but was being soft and gentle about it.

"Nothing more happened. It's not a big deal. Just a kiss and I'm over



it. Really."

Another lie. Jesus, couldn't she stop lying? She was NOT over him and she knew it. And she failed to tell Nikki about her even going so far as to say she would consider going on a date with him if he was nice to her. Eventually lying like this was going to catch up with her and maybe even work it's way around to Tucker.

When did she become such a bad person? Lying? Letting a boy kiss her? Having very unclean thoughts and getting hot under her collar over someone? If this was growing up then her body could just take it right back because she didn't want it!

"Well... I mean, it's Billy Hargrove. Of course he's good at getting girls to give up something to him. Don't feel bad, you really couldn't help yourself around a flirty dog like him. He's a real wildcard, that one."

Nikki sighed over the phone about him as if swooning imagining him getting her to kiss him but caught herself feeling bad for Mandy.

"Still, I'm sorry you got your heart slightly toyed with. At least it didn't go further than a kiss, right? RIGHT?"

"Right. No, I swear Nikki. Just a kiss. Nothing else."

"Okay, good. Whew. I mean I support you losing your V-card and all but... you know, you need to make sure you are ready for that and who you want it to be with. Billy is just way too intense for that for you, I think. No offense. He's the advanced course and you need beginners, love. Just ignore him and let Tina deal with him and his fickle horny ways."

Mandy nodded agreeing there, even if it was said under false pretenses because of her not being fully honest. A part of her did like Billy. A part of her did want to go on a date with him and have him kiss her again. But that part of her she needed to kill off completely. No good would come of it. The point Nikki made was still valid and matched his ego perfectly.

It was painfully obvious Nikki thought Billy's confidant swagger and macho presence around Hawkins High and at parties was hot. Mandy

found it annoying and immature as well as extremely telling of what kind of guy he was. He may as well be walking around with a lit up sign hung around his neck that read "CAUTION. KEEP OUT" or "BIOHAZARDOUS MATERIAL INSIDE. TOXIC."

He was like a house that was whitewashed and brand new in appearance on the outside but falling apart and dilapidated on the inside filled with broken furniture and cobwebs. It was a perfect metaphor for him.

But the broken parts inside that house were undeniably there and she had seen it. When he was angry, hostile, cold, or distant she could see in his eyes that there was also pain there too. She could admit it made her curious as to why he was the way he was.

Attempting to dig through that mess would be like trying to fully restore that condemned house which simply needed to be knocked down and rebuilt anew from the ground up. It would take a lot of work to do that but who was she to undertake that task? It wasn't her problem.

She switched back to worrying over how to deal with the Tucker situation. Would he be warm and greet her when she got there or would he go as cold as ice on her as she was doing to Billy in school?

"It's okay Nikki I wasn't expecting fireworks or a happily ever after. Or a house with marriage and kids. He's not the type to settle for that. I really don't care if he likes or wants me or not. I just gave him the damn kiss so he could crow about getting something from me no matter how small and then leave me alone. I thought it would work, maybe? That with a kiss he would be satisfied and stop pestering me. I was wrong I guess. So wrong."

The more she lied the easier it became to do it. What the hell was that all about?

"It's okay, sweetie. You just did what came natural to you and it sounded reasonable to you at the time. Don't sweat it." Nikki pitied her over the phone with her voice but tried to comfort her all the same.

"Okay. So...Tucker is going too." Mandy said flatly, feeling her heart sink. It was more a statement than a question.

"Yeah, of course. Mandy, you really need to just talk to him. Try and reason with him and just be there for him. His heart got crushed and you guys need to get your friendship back on track. He moans and whines around me and Alex all the time and I've even caught him crying a little bit. It's terrible. It's pitiful. It's... like the end of his world."

Nikki's usually playful happy voice dropped and sounded sad for both Mandy and Tucker and the situation they had found themselves in. It must be awkward for the entire group not just her.

"I know. I will. I will try and be there for him as much as I can. He's just too sore about it sometimes whenever I try. I don't know how to get him to understand or listen. If he's around and I go to him he takes off. And surely you've noticed how he won't sit with our group anymore if I'm there..."

Nikki understood. She knew how jealous and sensitive boys could be over crushes and young puppy love. She also had tried talking with him but he would close up on her if she even got close to helping him see the light and come around.

He wanted to talk to Mandy and yet he kept her at arms length and avoided her almost as much as she had been avoiding Billy. Everytime the Hargrove boy was looking at her and Tucker caught it he would get visibly angry and storm off. He even called Billy her "new boyfriend" once which was totally low and unfair of him.

"Well... you'll get that chance tonight. I will call him and soften him up for you so you can get through to him a little easier. Okay?"

Mandy ruminated on if wearing that bikini Nikki mentioned would be such a great idea if Tucker was going to be there. It would be like pouring salt and lemon juice over the wound and grinding it down into it.

Nikki tried to console her offering a plan with a sympathetic and caring voice and then yelled at her siblings for being too noisy in the

background and telling them to settle down. Mandy laughed. Her little brothers were often in her hair and always up to crazy stuff, especially when her friends were over or on the line with her.

"I gotta go, girl. It's the Thunderdome over here ever since my parents bought them foam toy weapons. Ugghh, my brothers are such nerds. No offense, Mandy darling. I will see you soon, my precious."

Nikki gave her a friendly kiss over the line and Mandy smiled saying goodbye to her friend while hearing her yell one last time at her brothers before hanging up the phone.

She sigh a melancholy noise escaping her and plopped down on her bed wondering what she would wear. She really did not want to wear the bathing suit Nikki was bringing over but she told her she would so no backing out of it now.

All her thoughts kept bouncing back and forth between Tucker and Billy. Always settling last on Billy as his beautiful eyes burned into her brain and his soft kissable lips he dangled in front of her like catnip to a feline whenever he got her alone stuck with her. And now she knew exactly what they felt like on hers and it was so cruel to constantly remember. Her hand instinctively moved over her lips as if she could feel them there again. After kissing her, her mouth had tingled all over and then the rest of her body followed suit.

She had hoped against all hope that Billy and Steve were sore enough enemies that he wouldn't dare set foot at his place to come to the party. Steve would be her only barrier and she supposed she could call him and ask him to not let him stay if he did show up. But how would Steve stop it if Tommy and Carol brought him along anyway? It was an uncomfortable mess between the four of them.

Since they were friends with Steve for three years now maybe longer, she could imagine them finding a way to squeeze Billy in past the gate to the party even if it pissed Steve off and he did not want him there. So there went that hope for salvation.

According to Nikki, who had a direct line to the rumor mill of Hawkins, Tommy and Carol weren't doing so hot lately. They were in

their own rocky throes of their relationship over the 'seeing new people' phase that had been brought up and they had apparently been fighting a lot more lately because of Tommy's wandering eyes to other girls. Mandy knew all about that. Tommy had done that to her more times than she cared to admit but thankfully it never went very far.

Mandy guessed that was more than likely the Hargrove boy's arrival and influence on him more than anything else. Billy was such a notorious playboy and Tommy was massively impressionable and clearly it was rubbing off on him. Tommy used to be Steve's loyal muscle and now it seemed he was Billy's new lap dog. They were like a pair of wild dogs together.

Carol seemed upset but as flighty as she was, even making eyes at Billy, Mandy didn't see her settling down with Tommy marrying and having kids with him anyway. So it would seem she let him go and decided to move on. Even through her obvious crush, she still had respect for Billy as Top Dog in their pack.

Billy was Alpha and Tommy was practically his male Beta wingman so whatever Billy did and said, Tommy would try to emulate that out of some sort of sick twisted flattery. Tommy was a monster but he was also a sheep and a kiss ass. He would follow the biggest and baddest dude around the school and it was like he linked up with them in thought pattern. The guy had no original thoughts in his head at all, he just went with whatever his ring leader told him to do, being a mouth piece.

That used to be Steve as ring leader, but now Billy had taken that loyalty away from him and brought Tommy to his side of things. Carol followed because, well, it was Tommy... so why not?

But Tommy's animosity and behavior was different from Billy's. Where Billy had shown restraint and stopped when she had made it clear where they stood after a few attempts, Tommy wouldn't stop during all the times he had tormented and harassed her even when she told him to back off.

He had smacked her books out of her hands, tripped her, pinned her against her locker making even more crude and demanding

advancements on her than Billy ever did. He made rude sexual gestures towards her often trying to grab her in places his hands shouldn't have been when the teachers and faculty weren't looking in the hallways.

He was more ruthless with the word 'no' and 'stop' being an alien dialect to him only further spurring him on in his chaotic tendencies. Unlike Tommy, Billy had complete control of himself when it came to the ladies he prowled for as well as having control over Tommy. He also had Tommy's total allegiance too. If Tommy got too wild, Billy would often reign him in, most likely out of him not wanting Tommy to outmatch him and steal his thunder. Keeping him under his thumb.

Shifting around on her bed not being able to find a comfortable position or to keep her place in her book, she found herself going back and re reading the same paragraph not really letting any of it sink in. Thinking about all of this she tried hard to maintain what she was reading but could not concentrate on it at all to save her life.

All she could do was keep on thinking about what might happen at the party, a nervous habit really, which she guessed was like a way of preparing herself for the worst. Leaving the comfort of her little world always had this effect on her.

She would take all things going on in her life currently and try to be three steps ahead of whatever it was while thinking what COULD happen. It was a little game she played with herself and she attributed it most likely to a survival skill at best and being flat out paranoid at worst.

Mandy thought about all the rumors going around finally putting down the book and giving up. Some were rumors and some were true. She had seen how Billy had outmatched and bested Steve on the basketball court during gym class within the first few days of joining the team and had replaced him as the lead and VIP as well as becoming the coach's new favorite player.

There had been talk of Billy Hargrove attempting to take over Steve's spot as King of Hawkins High and she hadn't really had time to have a proper sit down with him and ask him what was going on with

that. He seemed pissed off and stressed a whole lot more lately when on school grounds but she had chalked that up to problems between him and Nancy.

Last year, Steve had thrown a more private little party just between Tommy, Carol, Nancy, and Barb. He was after Nancy as a girlfriend and used that moment to get closer to her.

Come to think of it, when she compared the two of them, Steve was just nicer and less of an ass than Billy in how they did things when it came to chasing after girls or being popular. Steve had a good heart and wore it on his sleeve. His tough act had been a cover at Hawkins High to maintain his reputation, but deep down it wasn't really who he was. He couldn't be an ass without the guilt that came with it.

Where Billy would dispose of a girl after using her for one night, Steve had actually wanted to keep Nancy by his side even after they had gotten together that night. Also, Steve and Nancy were getting to know one another before seriously dating.

The word was that it had been at that fateful private party where Nancy had lost her innocence to Steve. It got around fast although Steve swore up and down he told no one and wouldn't do that to her. Mandy and Nikki had no doubt that it was Tommy and Carol's doing as they loved to spread things around the school to damage other people's reputation and peace of mind. Those two were just two evil peas in the same evil pod.

Thinking back to Nancy, Mandy could see the haunted pain in her eyes. There was trauma deep down inside mixed with intense guilt. She constantly blamed herself over Barb going missing possibly being kidnapped or murdered and Steve just didn't even want to talk about it let alone think about it. He just wanted to forget and let it go.

It was a damaging slow progressing form of PTSD she was going through and it was on top of the pain of sometimes being at his house. Mostly when having to be anywhere near that pool which is the last place Nancy had ever seen Barb alive. But she wasn't going to stop Steve from hosting his parties there. She just wanted no part in it. However, intel dictated she would be there tonight, most likely to try to move past it, however impossible it seemed.

Nikki and Mandy felt very badly for Nancy and had comforted and consoled her over it. Her constant guilt of feeling she had been too distracted with Steve eventually sleeping with him and losing Barb due to her carelessness of her friend, although it didn't help much.

She still hated herself because at the party she had forsook Barb and told her to go home, all alone, and leave so she could stay with Steve in his bedroom. They had been her last words to her. She felt she had directly yet indirectly had a hand in the disappearance of one of her oldest and closest friends.

That wound had never healed for her despite even King Steve's attempts to smooth things over and try to make her forget. She could only imagine the struggles Nancy was dealing with while striving to keep her and Steve's relationship alive and so it was no small wonder she was hesitant to attend tonight's pool party.

Mandy was almost afraid herself to go but for different reasons although both related to boy troubles. It seemed that whenever parties were involved in Hawkins, drastic changes and traumatic incidents happened in this small town to some of the best and worst people.

Nikki had told her Tina declared she wouldn't show up unless Billy was going to be there. Good. She could perhaps distract him and help keep him away from her if he showed up. The more women the merrier and the greater her chances of giving him the slip and dodging him all night.

In a scramble of desperation for people to show, and to keep on top of things to outdo Billy, Steve had made this party more inclusive open to all who wanted to come. It would be more of a rager than last time, she supposed to spite his parents also for their negligence. Which most likely meant there would be louder music, more booze, more friends and a legion of random people from Hawkins High School.

It would be bigger than his last party for sure almost rivaling Tina's bashes and it was a big 'F you' to his parents who were gone on their own personal vacation before they would return to 'be there' for Steve's graduation. If they even bothered to show.



The way he talked they were never home. Mandy got the impression they were simply rich parents who wanted nothing really to do with their son and seemingly always away from home leaving him to his own devices. It seemed they truly did not care what he did so long as the house was in perfect condition as it was before they left home.

Mandy imagined Steve was a very lonely guy despite all his popularity and his relationship with Nancy whom he spoke of very highly as the love of his life. She could see that every time they looked at one another or cuddled. Mandy was truly happy Steve at least found her and had Nance in his life.

She simply couldn't imagine her parents not being there for her or never being around like his how his parents treated him. It must be awful. Another portion of guilt driving her to going to tonight's party because he needed socialization almost as bad as she did.

Steve was a strange breed of high school boy. He was decent and warm openly now with people he cared about the most. Before that he would barely be sweet unless no one was looking. He would even deny his true self at times.

Steve could still be a dick sometimes if angered enough but he was nothing like Billy who was a total control freak who liked to boss people around. Or Tommy who got off to tormenting people as if he also had a thing for hurting innocent animals. There was a somewhat serial killer like personality being fostered within Tommy and Mandy feared him even more than Hargrove.

She bet the kiss from last night was on Billy's mind as much as it was on hers. He definitely would NOT let it go. It would be this thing forever fatally stitching them together and he would most likely use it against her to torment her now, if not attempt to come around for more. Give him an inch and he'll take the whole open road for himself bypassing the mile.

She had no doubt that he would use it each time he would try to approach and tease her every chance he got in school. That whole week he had kept asking her to go with him and she kept ignoring him and walking away. But could she walk away from him if he tried to catch her lips again the way he did last night?

Mandy scolded herself out loud for once again letting all her thoughts roam from one random thought and somehow morph into a way of thinking of Billy. It was like that game people played called 'six degrees of Kevin Bacon' in which there were at least six legit connections between seemingly random things or people or films that all led back to the famous actor.

That was how Mandy felt her brain was working about this distracting and egotistical boy. He had embedded himself into EVERYTHING, random or not, in her life and somehow wound up tied back to her. It was enough to make her wish she could just skip first period all together and never have to look at his stupid, horrible, cute grinning face ever again.

Mandy rolled over on her stomach and hugged one of her plushies while trying to kick him out of her brain with very minimal success. Nikki and the gang would be over in just a few hours and she hadn't even picked out anything to wear yet because of her distracted and stressed out thought processes.

She groaned inwardly and wished she had an alternative to the bikini Nikki was bringing but all she had was her pathetic horrible bathing suit she had worn around Billy at the community pool. She noticed that even then when it was old and ugly he had...

*NO. Not again. Stop it!*

Oh well, she guessed she would just have to go with it, suck it up and deal. But she would just die if he was there to see it. Like she needed to show off any more of her body for him than she already had at the pool. His eyes needed to take a break from being all over her all the time and...

*Damnit.*

Okay then she wouldn't get in the water. She would just cheat and wrap a large towel around herself and sit on a pool lounge or something. Or make excuses to keep going to the bathroom. Maybe lock herself in there as often as she could until it was all over.

Or she could just leave her regular clothes on over it and sit in the

chair and read a book. On second thought, that would be rude of her to Steve and her other friends. Why was teenage life so complicated?

One more year of this and she had hoped things would get better once she turned eighteen and was in college, but a lot of older girls that Nancy and Nikki knew had told her college was just stage two of high school only with more freedom when it came to classes, attendance, and studying, so that really disappointed her.

Oh joy of joys. More "Billy Hargrove's" to look forward to.

*Damnit again.*

Her thoughts and her cycles of constantly going back to thinking about Hargrove were interrupted when she heard the doorbell ring downstairs. It was the kind of doorbell that was loud enough the entire house could hear it. Her door was open so she imagined that also helped.

Who would be ringing their doorbell at this time in the evening when most people were sitting down to dinner with their families? Nikki wasn't even due until another hour or so. It couldn't be her already, could it? Or maybe... Tucker come to make peace with her?

Her heart leaped at that hopeful thought. Still she imagined it was something else entirely because her life couldn't possibly work out that well. Fate loved to mess with her when it came to having a life that made sense. It was most likely something less exciting.

*Mormons?*

She sighed not meaning to be disrespectful of any person's religion or beliefs. It was just that it happened so much it kind of got irritating after a while. It was a common thing around here. They had been making their rounds lately and had become much more assertive and persistent.

*Or maybe a salesman?*

They were ruthless enough to interrupt a time they knew to be family time just to ensure making a sale.

Her mother had hollared that it was for her and she practically jumped up from her bed nearly falling down while doing it. Her eyes grew wide and she dusted herself off then raced down the stairs hoping it would be Nikki to come rescue her from the sea of thoughts over Billy that were drowning her mercilessly more and more with each one.

Calvin and her parents were in the living room watching one of their favorite shows while eating together forsaking the kitchen tonight for comfort over practicality. Mandy had already eaten so she wasn't too hungry and had declined their offer to join earlier so she could simply mope and think in her room before the party.

She had gotten their permission to go when she talked with her father about it around the middle of the week but she still had to sit through a half hour of her dad laying down ground rules and worrying over her a bit for wanting to go.

She wished he would make up his mind. Either she stayed home too much and needed to go out more. Or she needed to be home safe and avoid social gatherings over the threat of peer pressure and boys. The Starcourt Mall just wasn't that fun anymore after having walked through it dozens of times.

Making it to the stairs landing she walked over to the front door with a look that matched her mother's one of surprise who had answered it then called her. She looked shocked but with a smile on her face and Mandy couldn't fathom why.

"Sweetie, there's someone here to see you." She grinned and looked weirdly happy stepping aside to let her go to the door. Mandy approached cautiously.

"Practically put the doorbell out of commission while attacking it repeatedly." Her father said in a grumpy gruff tone obviously mad their family time being interrupted.

Katherine laughed while returning to her place at her husband's side to get Calvin to eat his vegetables. Her father shot an annoyed look at this caller's constant ringing of the bell but settled back in with her mom once more.

When her mother had sat back down she had a strange looking euphoric smile on her face and it almost seemed as if someone had just given her a bouquet full of roses or something. She looked to her mom quizzically at first as if to ask her what was up with her but she quickly realized there was only one person that could make a full grown woman blush like that.

It hit her even before her mother began to point at the door that was slightly ajar with the person on the other side waiting motioning for her to just answer it. She was comfortable again snuggling back up to her dad who put his arm around her.

*Uh oh. No... please, no. NO. This is what she got for mocking the Mormons. God was punishing her right now.*

Mandy caught her mom whispering to her father who suddenly shot a partial glare of concern back at the door considering to get up and approach. He decided against it when their mother grabbed his shoulder asking him to stay seated and let Mandy answer it.

Mandy walked to the door slowly pulling it the rest of the way while wishing her suspicion was wrong and that it was actually Nikki. It definitely wasn't Tucker standing there so she could hug him and make him laugh like he used to with her. She didn't want him to be angry with her anymore.

Her heart was pounding as the door opened the rest of the way and it almost stopped dead immediately when the person on the other side came into full view. What she was hoping for was shattered the instant she recognized him.

Instead of Tucker standing on her front porch was the last person she wanted to see. Looking just as handsome and sure of himself as ever was none other than Billy Hargrove. He was looking off to the side with his hands on his hips all denim clad and looking sharp. When he looked at her he had his familiar wide grin on his face that made her want to punch it off of him.

Mandy's eyes opened wide and before her father could get up to come see what the fuss was about she turned back quickly to Billy who was glowing at seeing her. Obviously her telling him off at the

mall earlier today didn't phase him in the slightest much to her dismay.

Shutting the door behind her not wasting a second, she stepped outside to confront him hoping her father wouldn't follow. When a minute passed and he didn't she guessed her mom once more restrained him from interrupting keeping him where he was.

So stalking her around school and practically everywhere she went wasn't enough, was it? Now he was being bold enough to make housecalls on her whenever he felt like it even when uninvited? She was starting to regret inviting him to her house Friday night from the pool like she did. It clearly went to his head a little too much making him think he could just show up whenever he wanted to.

Billy looked her up and down and clearly he was admiring her lazy pajama lounge clothes. The Felix the Cat character all over them with crescent moons and Z's symbolizing sleep seemed to tickle him for some reason. She wore them to bed sure, but she also wore them whenever she felt like relaxing. Until Billy came along that is, now she regretted her choice in apparel for hanging around the house if he was just going to show up at random.

They were loose fitting pajama bottoms but they rolled and cinched up along the waist band around the circumference of her hips and hugged them slightly while exposing her mid section and belly button to his steady gaze. The top was even worse. A short but matching tank top showing off her shoulders, arms, a little bit of her chest and her cleavage allowing his wandering intrusive eyes to wander over every inch of her exposed skin and curves.

"WHAT... are YOU... doing here?!" Her face was NOT amused.

But he was sure as hell pleased with himself at inciting such a reaction out of her. Didn't he get enough of her last night? Didn't he get it from the way that she didn't answer him on the phone all last night and this morning and even blew him off at Starcourt Mall angrily while out with Nikki for a reason?

She demanded to know trying to be fierce while keeping her voice down in a whisper. She had her hand still gripping the door handle

and trying to keep her dad shut in from opening it and joining them outside in case he tried to. With a death grip on it she heard her mother tell her father to leave it alone, mind his business, and come back to the couch and finish eating.

Mandy shuffled her feet nervously as Billy looked at her from head to toe taking in the sight of her in her night clothes.

"Nice jammies, rabbit. Felix the Cat. Cute."

*God, I wish he would STOP calling me that!* She fumed internally to the point someone could fry an egg on her head.

He made like he was going to pick one out and poke it with his finger and she quickly reacted twisting away from his reach which only made him laugh at her in his usual teasing manner.

"I asked you a question, Billy. What are you doing at my house right now? It's rude to come over without an invitation and I didn't particularly want to see you after today. You could have just called."

"Would you have answered?" He shot back at her with quick wit using her denial of phone communication with him earlier today to make his point.

She crossed her arms and tried her best to look indignant but her dignity was quickly being shredded by him seeing her like this. She tried to cover her belly with her hands and arms. She was thankful she wasn't in her usual nightie that was much more silky and covered even less of her not leaving much to the imagination. But even this was pushing things too far.

Her face felt hot as she stood there incredulously at the fact that he was standing right here on her porch.

"My bad, I thought I was welcome here still. You're mother doesn't seem to mind. Am I a vampire or something?" He grinned and it upset her to have him talk about her mother at all over anything for any reason.

"Might as well be because you suck the peace out of my life constantly. Also, leave her out of it. She's highly susceptible to you

but that's not her fault it's yours. I'll ask again. Why are you here?"

She again demanded with that familiar scowl on her face and he sighed at her his grin faltering for a moment then returning.

"Well, I heard through the grapevine there was a pool party at Harrington's place. You may have already heard that I will be attending. I know your friends love to talk a lot and spread things around just as much as mine do."

She noticed he had said Steve's last name wrong.

He was digging at his nails pretending not to notice her anger and the flashing glare she was giving him while she tried to cover her chest and as much as her body she could. But he was definitely peeking glances once in a while looking and noticing, his stupid smirk making her want to sink down into the door mat. It said welcome. Maybe she should burn it.

"You mean Harrington. You harass him you can at least get his last name right. And I fail to see how such a thing would have you come all the way over here and knock on my door. But, okay? What about it?" She was losing her patience and fast. She had told him off in Starcourt yet here he was at it again and still trying.

She cut him off and he grinned while placing a piece of mint gum in his mouth and getting a bit closer. She had guessed he had just had a smoke not too long ago and she could smell it on his clothes but his breath remained fresh as ever and his teeth just as clean.

"Has anyone ever told you that you have a bad habit of interrupting people? Tsk tsk, rabbit. And here you are trying to teach me about manners."

He wagged his finger at her and his laugh made her go even more red in the face as he nitpicked on a flaw of hers. She began tapping her foot making a small sigh escape his lips and he shrugged continuing his explanation.

"Okay, so, as I was saying, a party tonight at King Steve's. Now, as you know, he and I don't get along so well. You've seen it in person



many times and I know that's why you're pissed at me. We're not going to be wearing matching 'best friends' necklaces anytime soon so don't get your hopes up. However, I was wanting to make a proposition with you. That is, if you would be so kind as to consider it."

He was the one refusing to not get along with Steve, not the other way around. She bet Steve would give him a chance to be friends if he wasn't such a jerk to him all the time and stopped bullying him.

Billy was a bully, she knew his type, and she loathed it about him. Still, there were other things she liked about him and that was the hard confusing part. He was a little bit of good mixed with a lot of bad and it killed her that he couldn't let the good come out more than the bad. As he stood there she couldn't help but feel that his smile felt genuine and it even looked convincing. However, this gentleman act wasn't flying with her as he had tried it before and she was stupid enough then to fall for it . Not this time.

There was something he wanted and that much was obvious. When Billy wanted something he would use whatever asset he had to assure his means of getting it, at whatever the cost. Just like he did last night trying to be cute and sweet with her to get her to kiss him. What would be her part in this and what would she get out of it?

"A proposition... such as?"

She eyed him suspiciously not letting her guard down for a moment, internally yelling at herself for even humoring him and asking. After how he treated Steve so far she wasn't really feeling inclined to be generous doing him any favors or making any deals with him. A small part of her was curious though. She just didn't want to admit it.

"Well, you see, Harrington has this... imaginary stick stuck up his ass about me. It's been there for a while, in fact, ever since I arrived."

He waved his hand shaking it while looking agitated as he said this. He scrunched up his face slightly showing his blatant distaste for Steve. Mispronounced again. His hatred of Steve was showing intensely.

"Imagine that." Mandy said flatly and dryly earning a chuckle out of him.

"Well, I also happen to be the new hotshot on the court in gym and I've apparently stolen the love and admiration of his team and his coach."

He gave a cocky laugh. If his laugh had a face she would punch that too. She recalled the day in the gym and pushed the images out of her head not wanting to. Not only because she felt so bad for Steve getting knocked over so much by him but also because she didn't want to think about him in his gym shorts, socks, sneakers, and nothing else.

"That's the real reason why we go back and forth. He's sour that I'm better on the court than him. It doesn't matter who started it just that I can finish it. Anyways, I'll get to the point."

She crossed her arms over her chest and slowly began to tap her foot. He noticed and got to the part where she came in.

"It's obvious you're a close friend of his and while I could ask Tommy or Carol, I thought I would ask you instead You have a better pull and vibe with King Steve the Sailor Boy. You could possibly help me with him. So... here I am. Asking you."

He leaned forward and put one hand on the doorframe bringing his body closer to her. His eyes were now gazing down into hers putting on a come hither stare. His manipulative dark eyebrows made him look so innocent as he did this that she almost felt lost in his icy blue stare.

With him being so close, she could smell the hairspray in his golden curls and the mint gum on his breath as well as his strong earthy and spicy cologne. He was reaching out a hand to wrap his fingers in strands of her thick dark hair and curl it around them. Mandy dodged his move just in time and this illicit another chuckle out of him.

He was losing patience too underneath his cool exterior but was doing well trying to maintain his charm. The way he was staring at her was making her stomach churn and she wished she had thrown

her robe over herself before coming down to answer the door. Her mother should have given her a more proper warning.

"Don't call him that. Ask me... what exactly?" She was now narrowing her eyes at him suspiciously and her tone cautious as he scooted even closer to her.

He was working up to that part. He had to go slow and make a strong case knowing she would just flat out refuse him if he asked her outright. Clearly, she was still upset from their little disagreement in the mall earlier and hadn't cooled down yet.

Billy knew he didn't need her to get in. Steve already agreed to him being there despite his taunting of him that much was solid and good to go. But if he could make her think that it wasn't and put on his usual charm maybe she would come around and allow him to give her a ride in his Camaro and maybe let him get close to her again at the party.

"I'm asking you to go out with me tonight to the pool party. Only this isn't just a date it's more than that. It's more like a you scratch my back I'll scratch yours kind of deal. I'm hoping you will stay close to your friend Steve in case I need you as a buffer between us to keep this party chill."

There was the catch. The thing he needed that he would say and do anything to get. He wanted her to keep Steve in line so there wouldn't be any explosive fighting between them and so Steve would let him maintain his presence there to drink and have himself a good time.

"As for asking your friends instead of you, I don't know your friends like I know you, Mandy. I don't have their numbers either. Not like I have yours."

The grin on his face when he said that made her stiffen up. She should never have given it to him.

"Besides, you're just across the street from me, Mandy. Judging from the way you invited me over so warmly to meet your family that day, I knew I could come over and ask for a neighborly favor from you,

what with you being so very sweet and thoughtful and all. Cup of sugar bit of milk kind of thing?"

Neighborly favors. Was kissing your neighbor while nuzzling into her and moaning blatantly in her ear getting her all tied up in knots how one showed neighborly hospitality? She was getting a bit flushed over the way he would make such complicated serious things sound so simple as if they had no weight or meaning behind them.

She gave a sarcastic laugh at that.

"This is nothing like that and doesn't even compare. I'd gladly give you your sugar and milk but something like this is asking a bit much and you know exactly why."

He tried hard not to get an angry look on his face about that and instead licked his lips slowly reminding her how he got both that kiss and her phone number from her in one night. He was using his good looks and his distracting mouth trying to cloud her thoughts up so she couldn't possibly deny him. It was semi working. His body heat and powerful frame was crowding her even though there was tons of space on her front porch.

"Move another inch and I'll say no right now and slam the door in your face, Hargrove." Her threat took him aback slightly but he was still all smiles calling her bluff on it being an empty one.

"Awww, c'mon, rabbit. After that lovely close bonding experience we shared last night? Even your little brother seems to like me more than you do. Don't you trust me?"

He smiled curling his lips up at her and despite her grounding herself in reality it made her heart flutter slightly. He winked and waited for her to calm down a bit before he continued his proposition.

"He's six. As for me, about as far as I could throw you and I would imagine that wouldn't be very far." She retorted giving a small snort at him and crossing her arms.

He laughed at that one nodding in agreement. He was pretty hard to lift especially for someone like her.

Why was she being so mean? It just wasn't like her. She wasn't usually this snappy with anyone, even if Billy had pissed her off because of his bad behaviors and hurting her friend, and it was making her feel very weird. Despite her not liking him, he had a point, he had shown her he could restrain himself around her and be sweet and gentle.

They had a great time by the end of night after watching the movie together before he went home. But something about him and the way he acted towards her still rubbed her raw and set her teeth on edge. Perhaps it was because of how manipulative he could be at getting her to loosen up and do even the smallest things with him. Holding his hand. Cuddling. Letting him press close to her. Talking her into spending time with him and inviting him over. Kissing him...

*Jesus. That was a big mistake. I'm so stupid.*

"Fair enough. I do work out a lot. Still, I'm here taking the chance and asking you to go with me. I'm hoping you will say yes. Think about it, we will both benefit from it. You will gain a little notoreity and turn some heads for being with me. I will gain Harrison, or whatever the hell his name is..."

"Harrington." Mandy practically ground out his correct last name with her teeth sick of him saying it wrong repeatedly. He had said Steve's name wrong multiple times on purpose just to be an ass.

"Yeah, whatever... Harringstan."

She rolled her eyes at him doing it again. She was beginning to tap her foot harder now. A nervous and angsty tick whenever she was truly mad at someone.

"I gain Harrington leaving me alone to have my fun and letting me stay. Unless... of course, that's too much for you to handle. Wouldn't want you to lose your pretty little head or anything over being with me even for just one full night. We both know how much you melt over the thought of kissing me. I recall a particularly fun movie night in which you absolutely loved my lips being glued to yours."

His wide grin let her know he absolutely loved it as well and would

want it again from her. No way in hell was she letting him kiss her again.

She blushed angrily at him reminding her of making the mistake of giving him her first kiss. He had tricked her into it by being completely sweet on her all night and then clouding up her thoughts to have his way with her after. He had asked and she had consented but he knew he had worked his flirty magic on her making her surrender to it rather unfairly. That was HIS fault not hers and she would never admit to it. She refused to be held culpable. Standing there with his gaze penetrating her every emotion, she could still recall the feel of his warm mouth and was memorizing the shape and contour of her own and she wanted to forget how he had made her feel when it happened. But she couldn't.

Billy made up his mind he wouldn't mention to her there was already a slight arrangement made between Steve and himself by buying the alcohol for his party as previously agreed upon. He had already delivered the payload last night after being with Mandy so it was all set in motion now. He liked this excuse in order to take her out and try to see how far he could go with her this time around.

He was thinking back to that kiss as well. He knew he wanted much more than a kiss from her eventually. Her lips had trembled against his and she had admitted earlier in the mall to it being her first kiss ever. He knew she wasn't lying about that judging by how slow and timid she was when their lips touched. The idea of that had driven him on all night long as he lay in bed thinking about it. There were a lot of firsts he wanted with her and more than what she had already given.

That kiss was constantly on his mind and he needed to finish what he started. He enjoyed their little games but eventually it would have to come to an end. She could only deny him for so long. Just how long could she honestly last?

A knowing smile spread slowly over Mandy's face that made him think for a moment she was truly considering this. She was smiling only because she was learning his game. There it was. There was that arrogant tone again. When he enjoyed her smile she suddenly pursed her lips tight. He simply kept smiling wide seeing how he was

winding her up. He liked it.

"Go with you to the pool party. Keeping tabs on Steve for you? Are you joking? What makes you think I would say yes to that? He's not the problem, you are. I know I stated it very clearly to you that no apology to Steve means no dates or hanging out with you. Or did you miss that part?"

She couldn't stop herself from spitting venom at him. He looked like he was hurt for a moment looking down at his boots but he was clearly just acting the part.

"No, I didn't miss that and yes, I do know. But to be fair I did apologize to you for it and I'm still hoping you will at least accept that. It's the best I could do for now. Maybe I can apologize to him when we arrive at the party together tonight? Would that work for you?"

Man, he was slick. He really would say anything. And he still couldn't see that apologizing to her instead of Steve was not the same thing at all, not even close. Mandy knew he wouldn't follow through on that one. She was almost sure once he got a ton of alcohol in his system he would just forget about it or be busy hanging out with his bully brigade all night. She frowned and he almost did too but kept his cheerful playful tone of voice going.

"I think you would have a great time with me. We've practically established that. It would be my honor to escort you to this party. If you'll have me, Miss Hawkins."

He took a slight bow towards her, the laughter in his blue eyes, while addressing her formally using her name respectfully for a change yet still making a soft joke out of it.

"How do I know this isn't a setup? Some kind of running joke or prank from you, Tommy, and Carol? Are they in on it too? I am not amused."

She accused him point blank not willing to be fooled but biting back her full seething anger in case she set off his temper or pushed too hard.

Billy was not known for patience or having to repeat himself to people when asking or demanding for something. But to her surprise he just gave a soft deep laugh and then looked her straight in her eyes with all sincerity.

"No. Nothing of the sort. I wouldn't dream of doing that to you, sweets. What we do is none of their business. I would just like you to go with me for the ride there and back and make sure Steve sees us together so he will back off. No strings attached, of course. But if you're feeling generous, I wouldn't mind another one of those delicious kisses from you."

We. He had said we. As if they were both a thing now.

*Her? Kiss him again? Hah. No. Never again.*

She doubted very much that he wouldn't make sport of her to his friends. The rumors were still circulating and she still wasn't sure if he was innocent of it or not just yet.

He replied coolly to her and reached towards her pale soft hands with his tanned strong ones and holding his position there he was waiting for her to receive them until she unfolded her arms and accepted the gesture.

Billy took her hands in his and smoothed them over with his strong fingers. Looking down into her green eyes he was searching to see if he could get even closer to her like he did that night. He dared to step closer but stopped suddenly as if being cautious. He was testing the space left between them to see just how much she would let him approach and was trying to read her reaction to him.

She stood there and stared up at him, her hands held still and being warmed by his, but her face must have softened because he smiled and got a few inches closer to her. He licked his lips and she couldn't help but notice it. Her head was screaming to say no and run back into the house.

Her motivation to do so came when she recalled Tina in the hallway exchanging numbers with him on their hands. Recalled how she had flirted and giggled with him at her locker. Remembered how she had



been in the gym to watch him play ball and followed him helplessly around school in between classes.

She pulled her hands away trying hard to mask whatever it was she was feeling. She had spent a whole week successfully ignoring him and now it was all falling apart over one tender night with him and a sappy stupid kiss. She could not let this happen. As for Tina...

"Thought you were taking Tina? And why me? Just go ask Tommy and Carol to get you into Steve's place. I'm sure they could talk him into it. You don't need me..."

Jealousy? Was she jealous? No way, why would she be? It was no competition with her and Tina. None was clearly the better choice for him. So why waste his time on her?

She looked down at the ground starting to back away and he felt her trembling slightly before she had removed her hands from his. He was looking down at her when she looked away and he suddenly and slowly moved his hand to lift her chin before she could leave so she would look him once more in the eyes. Her breathing was getting more and more labored just by him touching her but she tried to hide it from him.

"Tommy and Carol won't because Steve would be very upset with them. Tina's not really my type but she refuses to leave my side and I don't want to be rude to her blowing her off. She's just someone I tend to mess with from time to time out of fun but we aren't dating one another we're just friends. But, you Mandy, I would be absolutely thrilled to have you with me at this party tonight."

*What a two timing... double dealing... did he really think she would believe this crap? He wanted his cake (Tina) and to eat it (Mandy) too!*

She tried hard not to visualize that, his mouth roaming all over her body as if she were a delectable pastry, and shook at the thought of it. Even so, she doubted very much he had a type and was as picky as he claimed to be. Every type was his type so long as it had breasts, a cute face, and walked on two legs. So that was ANY girl willing to allow him to take her out.

His heartbreaking smile mixed with the way he was holding her chin up so gently was almost making her unable to deny him the longer they stood there. He was wearing her down. Just like that night on her porch before he seized her trembling mouth with his experienced one. She was almost going to give in but she wasn't ready to give him that satisfaction.

"I can't. I'm going with Nikki and Alex and Tucker will be there too tonight. They should be here any moment to pick me up."

She moved her chin out of his hand and backed up slowly. He was moving with her and she was flattened against the door slightly. He moved his eyes up and down as he gazed into hers reading her face to see if she was being honest with him. Dissecting her every move and every expression to see if there was a hint somewhere there. The slightest giveaway that she was sincerely not interested in him. She could have fooled him last night by the way she settled in against him and then kissed his cheek and neck.

"Please, rabbit. It would mean so much to me. I promise to behave. Won't you reconsider? You would really make my night if you would say yes."

*What was his definition of 'behaving'? Because she clearly knew that it wasn't his particular forte to 'behave' with her at all.*

His lips were gaining on her own and she felt her heart pounding. She gulped when he came so close that his face was mere inches from hers once more just like after their night of watching Romeo and Juliet. She no doubt knew that movie had filled his head with the stupid idea to beg a kiss from her when her guard was down.

His sweet minted breath was now caressing her lips and washing over them. His blond curls spilling over his shoulders, his ears, and one loose curl had cascaded down his forehead. He was making her feel so small just being this near to her as he pressed on to try and convince her.

"I don't know. Is this really about Steve or are you just trying to push me into doing things with you and dating? I don't want to be used by you, Billy, I know how you make the girls at school cry over you. I

won't be one of them. Besides, don't people like you just crash parties and get in anyway?"

He looked insulted for a moment but it quickly passed. He was getting slightly angry, she could tell by his posture and his eyes, but he strived hard to still talk softly to her and be smooth in his response.

"Me? Use you? Never. Dating? I wouldn't mind. I just think we could have a lot of fun. In fact, I know we would. Look, you don't even have to call it a date or even consider it to be one. I'm still waiting on that from you but this outing doesn't have to be it. Nothing serious I promise. Just us arriving together, you keeping Steve in line, and then me bringing you home. That's all. You have my word."

He was tickling her hand with his fingertips and messaging her palms and it made her brain feel rusty like the gears couldn't turn and she couldn't even think straight. She sighed softly and when she looked calmer and more receptive to him he smiled down at her.

He knew he almost had her right where he wanted her. He was very good at making people feel special while getting his way with them, that much was certain. The practiced art of manipulation was a tool he used quite effectively on people and she was no exception to that rule. She just wanted him to leave and it was most likely he wouldn't until she agreed.

*Damnit. Fine! Whatever will get him to go away and leave my front porch!*

"Okay. Fine. But I have some conditions that must be met before I agree to let you bring me there with you. I will keep Steve off your back but you have to promise me a few things."

He looked at her sideways. He knew how crafty she was. He would have to be careful what he agreed to with her from here on out. Making a deal with her was like making one with the Devil himself and she would come to collect come hell or high water.

Billy looked like he was about to lose it at feeling so controlled and constrained by someone with a penchant for stipulations but he kept

his face polite and nodded as he listened. He was not used to letting someone else make the rules or tell him what to do.

He closed his eyes for a moment weighing how badly he wanted this. How badly he wanted her to go with him. Licking his lips told her he wanted it very badly. Wanted to taste that sweet soft amazing mouth of hers again.

"Name it." He said after a moment in a breathy whisper and it stirred her stomach with the intensity that he was gazing into her eyes as he responded with his compliance.

"You don't fight with Steve or upset him. If you won't apologize to him you can at least do that for him from now on. Keep your distance from him and don't antagonize him. In fact, you don't antagonize or fight with ANY guy there. Especially my two friends that will be there with me."

This first one already got under his skin. Steve he could leave alone because he wouldn't be much of a challenge anyway and it would violate their private deal. But to not fight with someone else? There's nothing more he liked than drinking and fighting. Drunken scrapping was fun for him. Like moshing in the pit of a rock concert. Or taking care of business for himself when in the dark of his room with his imagination going wild.

He cared not to recount all the times he was thinking of Mandy when he did that sometimes. She could never understand just what she did to him and how badly he wanted her. He imagined she wouldn't be very happy to know that, as it might be too soon and freak her out. He was a lustful creature of habit though and had no shame in it. It was perfectly natural for a guy to fantasize. As long as it was never forced on someone outside of the fantasy. That's where he drew the line.

He deliberated on this for a moment which made her hesitate and want to back out of this. She could see he was struggling to accept this part of the deal. Forcing a smile, he nodded in agreement, although his eyes told her all and that he was itching to rebel.

"Agreed. Next?" He said still keeping his gaze steady on her. He must

really want this because he was not backing down or walking away.

"Also, you don't hit on my friends. I'm very protective of them and they are of me as well. You can socialize with them but don't mess with them, alright? No matter how they may follow you around or flirt. And by friends I specifically mean Nikki and Nancy."

He removed his hand from hers to cross his heart making a sign that he promised.

"Agreed."

This one was easy. He wasn't interested in them anyway so that part was simple to accept and promise.

"Anything else?" He asked, his patience wearing thin and his breathing getting tense, but his smile was still there to put on the facade that he was okay with all of this.

"One last thing. You keep your hands off of me starting from the moment you come to get me at my door to go with you to the party all the way to dropping me off at my door tonight. No more kissing. No hands on activity. I'm not saying we can't speak to one another or hang out but you need to learn to respect my personal boundaries. I'm not going to have you pawing at me all night or suffocating me with your mouth. It makes me feel... I just don't want to. That last stunt you pulled after our movie night by tempting me into consenting for a kiss? It can't happen again. I mean it."

This one made his smile falter. He looked like she had just shot him in his chest. He had thought she WANTED him to kiss her. She had nodded and agreed when he asked her if he could. Why was she making it out like he had forced her into that?

He thought this over and this was equally hard for him to agree to. She could see something that registered as hurt or emotional confusion on his face. But after a few seconds he recovered attempting to nod in agreement.

He wouldn't say it with his words that he agreed like he did the other two. His stance and posture shifted from confident to confused and

slightly unraveled but she didn't understand why his mood shifted so suddenly. He almost looked deeply upset by this last one. As if he did not want to hold to it.

"Well, without contact... it isn't much of a date anyways, is it? So why are you worried over it being called a date?"

He said trying to force a laugh but it wasn't as smooth or practiced as it was before. He seemed put off by this last condition. The laugh he tried to give her was a weak one covered with something else hiding underneath it that was not easily identifiable.

"Because it's NOT a date, Billy. It's me doing you a favor so you can party and have fun and you in return promising to behave yourself around me for the night. That's the deal. Take it or leave it."

Her chin was strong and resolute not giving an inch on this. He admired her tenacity and the guts she had to speak to him this way. No other girl had ever dared other than Max but she didn't count.

Although it made him angry it also fired him up in a strange satisfying kind of way. She was shorter than him but she looked so much taller, stronger, and her confident fire was in her eyes burning passionately again. It made him want to give her anything she wanted. He was impressed with how she was holding him to this.

He grinned at her lowering his head then kissed her hand in response, but he felt like she could see through him despite his honest efforts to hide his feelings. To Mandy it seemed like he was enjoying how bold and outspoken she was being with him. Direct and up front. No games. She was obviously less timid than she had been before with him and this seemed to spark an even bigger interest in her that wasn't really there before when she was being shy or impervious to him.

"I'll take it, rabbit. But I request permission to at least try and give you another kiss. Just for good measure to make sure you truly don't like it when I KNOW you do. Our movie date kiss was plenty proof of that. If you react and kiss me back then it's settled that you like it. If you don't then I won't ask for another one again."

She frowned with him still insisting they had been on one last night and that she truly wanted and enjoyed that first kiss they shared.

"One more kiss. At a time of my choosing. If this is a deal we're making I am doing an awful lot for you on your side. Where's my gratification in exchange other than taking you out with me?"

He said it so smoothly and she eyed him for a moment. Her face looked distressed by his request at a compromise but she didn't say no or protest. If she didn't say no then that meant she technically agreed, right? He took that as a sign she was okay with it and would allow him to do it one last time. He better make every second of it count and really wow her with his lips so she had no choice but to react to it. He had a gut feeling she wanted him to kiss her again anyway judging by how she fully kissed him back last night right where they were now standing. Next time it would be much more passionate and less gentle than before. He would make her feel how badly he wanted her with his mouth and make sure she could not resist him while doing it.

He moved in like he was going to take it then and there and she shut her eyes breathing hard. He laughed softly his lips just inches from hers but to her surprise he lifted her hand instead to his eager warm mouth. Before kissing it his lips curled with a sultry smile. He pressed his smooth lips to her even softer hand and kissed it slowly taking his time.

Her heart began to race and he closed his eyes while doing this showing his lovely long dark lashes while leaving warm wet kisses all over her hand. He did it slowly, seductively, and she let him without flinching or pulling away. Did he mean that kiss to be a kiss on her hand or did he mean her mouth later on? Did this one count?

She gave a small smile at him not really wanting to but his lips relaxed her and the feeling made her feel light and dizzy. She tried to hide it from him but he saw it and returned it to her looking into her eyes while stopping mid kiss.

She was worried her dad would come barging out any moment and catch him so she pulled away when he tried to resume doing it again. He saw the nervous look on her face and gave another laugh thinking

it was mostly because of what he was doing to her. Oh if he only knew, he would never let her live it down. She would never tell him. Never let him know. It was hers alone to keep forever inside.

"Alright. Well, I will leave you be to get ready and call your friends to tell them the change in your plans. I will return here in a half an hour to pick you up. See you soon. Oh, and by the way... that one didn't count. I'll still claim my kiss later but you'll never see it coming, rabbit. What fun would it be if you did?"

He grinned licking his lips slowly and then taunting her by biting his lower one. He looked longingly at her for a moment and then turned to walk away down the path. He jogged across the street back to his house practically kicking his heels up happily.

She would be a liar if she said she didn't love his wide perfectly shaped mouth or admire his form with how his jeans fit him perfectly at all angles while watching him run off to his house. She could easily see his excitement to be around her again. But this time it wouldn't be in the safety of her house with her parents around. It would be her being alone with him in his car. She swallowed dryly and was extremely nervous at the thought of it.

She watched him enter his house and shut the door behind him. Before going back inside she pressed her back against the front door trying to control her breathing. The reality hit her hard. She had made the deal with him, like some archaic demon wanting it written in blood, and now feared she risked losing her soul to him. But she resolved never to give her body or her heart to him no matter what he said or did.

*This is insane. What am I thinking?*

Looking at the blue Camaro parked in the driveway she realized this would be the first time she had ever ridden in it with him. She had seen how fast he drove it along the back roads to school when she was walking.

He had stalked her in his car offering her rides during her week of ignoring him but she had turned her nose up at him and tried hard to give him the silent treatment as if he wasn't there. He would just



laugh sometimes while other days he would look angrily at her and drive off without her. Hopefully he wouldn't drive at breakneck speed and freak her out. She should have made that one of her rules and cursed herself for not mentioning it.

What the hell just happened? She was now on a date, that was NOT a date, with Billy Hargrove? And to make things worse she consented to him kissing her again whenever he chose to do it? Oh God, what would she do when he came to collect? She now had a new headache to deal with as she could practically hear Nikki squealing at her if she told her.

A pang of guilt hit her when she suddenly could also picture Tucker's crushed look on his face. Both he and Billy would be there. He better not do it at the party, she would just die. Although she would love to try and explain it, he would never understand, she couldn't even explain it to herself. Even if she did, he just bet that he would never forgive her either.

Tucker HATED Billy Hargrove and had accused her not too long ago of wanting Billy over him, which was so far from the truth it stung her badly it made them have a falling out. She had just got him back enough as a friend to talk to her at school from time to time and be willing to go to this party with all of their friends tonight knowing she would be attending. How would he react to this? She could imagine. And what would happen if Billy didn't keep his word and got touchy feely with her?

She groaned and pinched her nose once she realized she would also have to bring Billy to her father once more when he came to pick her up. This wasn't a movie night. This was him riding around in a car with her and being at a friends house at a party unsupervised. Her father was NOT going to be happy. He would definitely wind up giving Billy "the talk".

Yeah... that was going to go over real smoothly. She could picture her father taking down his rifle in front of Billy even loading it and making his usual threats while telling him to respect his daughter. She could hear her mother's nervous laughter trying to ease the tension while also trying to offer him baked goods to stop her husband from embarrassing their little girl. She should have just told

Billy she would meet him at his place but it was too late for that now.

Turning to go back inside the house with the look of a woman on death row resigned to her fate she tried to put her best smile on for her parents so they wouldn't think anything was wrong. She slowly opened the door she pushed it and both her parents gave her a questioning look but went back to pretending like they were focusing on the movie and hadn't been listening in on her and Billy through the door.

"Mom? Dad? There's something I need to tell you guys. Please don't freak out and let me finish, okay, before you cut in?"

They both exchanged curious glances with one another and then looked back at her expectantly as if to beg her to spill it and fast.

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## 11. Rules For Dating My Daughter

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

### **RULES FOR DATING MY DAUGHTER**

**(STEVE'S POOL PARTY PART 2)**

**NOTE:** This is a rather long part of the story so I may need to break up the pool party chapter into a 3 or 4 parter. Sorry there is just so much going on. We shall see. :D

**Summary:**

Mandy's father is none too thrilled about the Hargrove boy taking his daughter out on a "date" to the pool party. It's really pushing his boundaries based on the talks he has had with Mandy in the past about things like this. Mandy is worried about Billy having to sit down and have a talk with her father. She fully knows what's coming next...

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She came over and sat down on the couch with them. Calvin was in

her mother's lap and was still snoozing fast asleep. Her family looked so perfect and happy like that. It was a perfect snapshot moment even without her in it.

She wondered if Billy ever had something like this with his family. The night of the shared 'welcome to the neighborhood' dinner at her place between the two families answered her question bitterly and with sad finality.

Judging by how he didn't get along so well with Max whenever she saw the two of them interact in the school parking lot, and how his father Neil treated him while Susan remained silent about it, she doubted that very much.

It made her want to sometimes kidnap him and Max and have them bask in love and support from her family in place of the one falling apart attempting to masquerade as one across the street. It couldn't be easy and it definitely explained a lot of his anger and how he would close himself off to people.

A sliver of sadness stabbed her in the heart when unwanted memories of her own tried to resurface. She shut them out resisting her trembling lip and put on a smile for her family snuggling into her father who hugged her close. Now the portrait was complete.

"Who was that at the door?" Her father asked already probing. She sighed expecting this.

"Was that the Hagrove boy?" He had a grim expression on his face. He met him the night of the dinner and noticed him making bedroom eyes at his daughter last night during their movie night.

"He's so very charming and handsome. He really seems to like you, Mandy. Are you going to be attending Prom with him perhaps?"

Her mother said turning a little pink when her father turned at this disturbing news. Just the idea of Billy taking Mandy to Prom was sending him through the proverbial roof imagining it.

Katherine shrugged forgetting how overprotective her husband was of Mandy and tried to give him a look to not worry about it.

*Oh, god. Billy was getting to her mother, too. Was there ANYONE he could not charm the pants off of?*

Her mother was just smiling waving it off as nothing but a passing comment. She leaned in and kissed her husband to let him know he was the only man for her and he grinned. Mandy smiled. They were so adorable together. She just loved her family so much. She saw the same thing in them that she saw in Steve and Nancy.

Mandy was sure her mom didn't mean anything by it. She was loyal to her father and would never step out on him or break their home. Not for anyone and least of all for a guy like Billy who was a mere teenager in high school. Hopefully Karen Wheeler felt the same. Mandy shuddered.

He did look much older for his age so she could imagine things could get weird fast between him and an infatuated older woman. The thought of it was gross and she shut that thought train down at the station before it could even begin to board.

By the way her mom looked when she turned to address Mandy after answering the door she could guess at what kind of thoughts were running through her mother's head when staring at an impressive looking guy like Billy Hargrove standing before her. He apparently had this way with all females young and old so it wasn't surprising at all. She bet he could even make Mrs Bannister blush.

However, to be fair she couldn't blame her mother for having that reaction. Billy was a charmer and Mandy herself was a victim of it too although she hated to admit it.

He had evidently smooth talked her mother into accepting him as an evening caller to her daughter with ease. Her father would have swiftly shut the door in his face being very rude. Mandy chuckled at that thought almost wishing it had happened so she could see the look on his face when it did.

"Yeah, dad, same guy from last night. He's also the one that came to our dinner party with his family, remember? I know him from school. We're in first period English class together."

Mandy sighed already seeing her father shift uncomfortably in his spot on the couch, his itchy trigger finger as he looked over the fireplace to his prized possession. A hunting rifle that was a gift from Chief Jim Hopper. They were close friends almost like brothers. Every time this stuff came up that rifle was the center talking piece.

He was already gearing up and getting ready to lay down the law. He called it the 'rules for dating his daughter' and even had the paper posted up on the fridge with his favorite magnet. He cleared his throat and spoke his mind doing exactly what Mandy knew he would do and say.

"I would very much like to speak to this young man, Mandy. BEFORE you go anywhere with him tonight. I'm guessing he is the one taking you to the pool party? I thought your friends were picking you up?"

He almost choked that sentence out as if he were nervous about letting some strange guy take her anywhere in a strange car to a place he did not have the contact information to yet. His voice was gruff and her mother put her hand on Rick's shoulder trying to help him relax as she could sense what was coming.

She didn't want him to be upset or make a show of it while also simultaneously scaring away a potential boy in Mandy's life and ruining the night for her. She also didn't want him to wake up Calvin with his sharp tone.

"Honey, remember what we talked about? He's a sweet boy. Very well dressed. Clean and very handsome too. My little girl has great taste and he seems a very honorable young man."

*Oh, wow. Was she talking about the same Billy Hargrove as Mandy knew?*

Mandy wanted to die laughing and croak right there in the living room over that statement. Her mother obviously DID NOT know Billy as well as she thought she did. Her father was closer to the truth than she was without even knowing it.

That last part, calling him handsome, upset her father greatly and he grumbled with his mustache twitching. If Billy was handsome

according to Katherine then he by default he was handsome to Mandy, despite the logic fail on that one. It was obviously making him connect some very uneasy dots in his mind. Riding alone with him in his car? Going to a party with him? Having him bring her home? He clearly did not like the idea.

Her mother rolled her eyes and sighed seeing Rick's struggle to accept that their daughter actually had a date with a boy for the very first time.

"Dad... please. Calm down. I promised you I would be careful and hang out only with my female friends, right? I also told you that you could always have 'the talk' with a potential date. But when I said it to you I had told you the only boy I would ever bring in this house for you to meet would be 'THE ONE'. Trust me Dad, Billy Hargrove is NOT 'THE ONE'. It's not like that at all. So it's kind of unfair."

She said defensively sitting in between her parents on the couch leaning back into it and putting her arms over her chest. In the time it took her to speak with Billy, they had most likely been pre discussing it in between trying to spy on the two of them and listen in.

Her father thought about this for a bit mulling it over in his head. But he was resolute and determined to speak with him making his rules clear regardless.

"I still need to have a... heart to heart with this Hargrove boy before he takes you anywhere." Mandy hugged her dad leaning her head on his shoulder giving in knowing it was pointless to argue.

"Yes, daddy." She said giving in looking up at him sweetly but he wasn't going to let her sweet talk her way out of this one or butter him up. It was an iron clad rule he had stated ever since her parents had 'the talk' with her once she had matured into a young woman and got her first cycle.

That was a horrible night. They were awkward and unsure of how to talk to her about it and her mother, being the ever helpful nurse that she was, even brought out female diagrams, pictures, and charts. Mandy had sunk down into her chair thoroughly grossed out while

her father looked at the ceiling during most of it likewise not wanting to look at the visuals. It had horrified her but she had to sit through it and listen.

She loved her parents but sometimes they could go a bit overboard, especially her father. The last boy that had taken interest in her in Hawkins Middle School never bothered to show up to her house because he had a reputation around town to all the other guys of being very protective of his only daughter. And owning the rifle couldn't have made it any better either. Mandy's mother had often scolded Rick for driving off any boy who would attempt to take her out on dates but her father always had the final say.

"When he comes to pick you up bring him inside and I will talk with him. This is not open for debate."

Her mother sighed and Mandy nodded hoping this wouldn't go the way she pictured it to in her head, but most likely it would. Perhaps her dad would scare Billy straight into being more respectful after all and do most of the work for her. So something good COULD come out of this 'heart to heart'. It would still be super embarrassing despite her father's good intentions and she could not quite figure out why she even cared so much.

This was NOT a date. He was NOT her boyfriend. And she would rather jump off of Saddler's Quarry than give herself to a guy like Hargrove. The memory of him stating he would be getting his kiss from her eventually had resurfaced and it made her burn up inside. Her stomach slightly twisted with panic and another feeling she could not quite name. Would he actually do it? Or was he just messing with her again?

Still she would have to go through the motions to satisfy her father before setting foot in that beautiful and fast car of his with an equally beautiful and fast boy like Billy driving it.

She had only hoped her dad, being the mechanic he was, wouldn't have a heart attack seeing that Billy drove such a dangerous vehicle as the Camaro RS that often ripped and roared through the neighborhood. But she had a feeling he already knew the one and would be setting strict rules on that as well. Oh, Billy was going to



just LOVE her father laying down even more lines for him not to cross.

"You promised me dad. You said you would be gentle." She stated as she looked up at her dad with a mix of emotions all tumbling inside of her.

Defending Billy? Fearing him? Feeling wanted by him? Loathing him? Wanting her dad to scare him straight and yet take it easy on him? She couldn't figure herself out today.

"Oh... I will be as gentle as I possibly can, sweetheart. But I will get my point across. He better listen or I'm flat out saying no."

Mandy closed her eyes and sighed but agreed and went upstairs to get ready. She had to pick an outfit that her father would approve of no doubt. That would be the tricky part. To look nice without looking tempting like a juicy worm on a hook for big fish like Billy or making her father demand she run back upstairs and change into something "more proper".

If her dad had it his way she would be wrapped up in even more layers than she already put herself into and then have chains and locks all over her to keep it on or super glue her clothing to her.

She laughed at the thought as she brushed her long raven letting it free fall feathery soft and straight over her neck and shoulders. She didn't mind if it got wet in the pool, that is, if she did decide to get in and swim.

Mandy looked at herself in the mirror with her off the shoulder black top on and the matching black skirt that made it look like a one piece dress.

Noticing she was filling it out nicely she couldn't help but feel a little pretty in it. She was developing and was, according to father, very beautiful indeed. Beautiful enough for him to kill someone over her if a boy ever hurt her or dishonor her. Mandy frowned. Despite him wanting her to, she couldn't stay his little girl forever.

Her mother often told her how gorgeous she was and behind her

father's back she would often encourage her to dress more mature wearing nicer things to compliment her looks. Mandy just never really wanted to dress in any other fashion that was comfortable for her.

But no matter what she wore, Billy always hounded her and still stared, regardless, almost as if he had X-ray vision and could see past it all. Tucker did the same although he was much more discreet about it.

Before she put her tights and dress shoes on she gave a quick phone call to Nikki but no one answered. She figured she would see her at the party anyway so she could explain it to her when she arrived there.

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Billy was true to his agreement and showed up exactly a half an hour later. She heard the knock at the door and had been sitting in the kitchen discussing things with her dad.

Her mom had went to bed telling Rick not to get too crazy or overbearing and he had sent her to bed half promising that he wouldn't and that he had everything under control.

Mandy jumped up from her seat and timidly made her way to the front door, her father's steely gaze on her waiting like a lion ready to pounce. She shook her head and nervously opened the door.

Billy was dressed up to the nines in one of his favorite outfit. He had on his black leather jacket and a red button up shirt that had at least three buttons undone. He had combed his hair and was looking great. Another reason her father would no doubt lose his cool if Billy didn't mind his manners and listen respectfully.

"Well, hello. You look amazing, rabbit. Although I think I still prefer the pajamas you had on earlier."

He teased her and she stepped aside letting him enter their home. Billy looked around and whistled as he admired the nice set up.

"Billy..." she whispered getting his attention. He looked at her and

leaned in to hear her better while grinning.

"Whatever happens. Whatever he says. Just nod and say yes. Behave. Don't try to be slick or cocky. He won't stand for it. If you want to take me out tonight you will do as he says. Understand?"

His grin turned to confusion and he looked at her questioningly and was about to mouth the word 'what?' when as soon as he came inside the his eyes went immediately to her father sitting in the living room. He looked him up and down and all over and gave a grunt. His arms were folded and he looked very angry.

Mandy almost relished in the fearful serious look that was on Billy's face at seeing her father again, only this time looking strict and mean, not kind and interested like he did the night of the dinner and their first meeting.

"So... the infamous Billy Hargrove. Welcome back to MY home, son. Come have a seat right over here." He patted the couch cushion for Billy to sit and he looked back nervously at Mandy while walking slowly over there to do as he was told.

Mandy choked up a bit as she sensed the oncoming barrage of her fathers intimidation that was sure to follow soon. She closed the door and then took a seat in the chair across from the couch and living room table where Billy and her dad were sitting.

She folded her hands neatly over her lap but fidgeted a bit. There was a big nervous tension in the air despite this being routine. She knew what he would say and do next. But she was still nervous as she sat quietly and watched giving her father the floor. He would not let her leave this house until he made things painfully clear to Billy.

"Thank you, Sir. I am honored to be welcomed back into your home."

Billy gave his best 'PG parents love me' charming smile and moved professionally like he was going to shake her father's hand. Her dad looked at his hands but didn't make a move to return the gesture.

Billy's smile half faltered and he sat very still. He was trying to be charming but met his match in her father. Finally someone he could

not pull the wool over or manipulate. He swallowed hard noting her father's hard stare. He was looking tense but trying to hide it as best as he could. He made himself as comfortable as he could too but being near a strict parent, although nothing new to him, was clearly getting to him.

He sat forward in a proper position and during the entire conversation he met her father's eyes and kept them there respectfully. He didn't dare pull his wandering eyes thing with Mandy in her father's presence. Mandy wanted to laugh but pinched her lips tight and covered her mouth to suppress it. He looked so very afraid and down to earth in this moment.

"All pleasantries aside, I am sure you know why I have asked to talk to you before you take my daughter out with you tonight."

Her dad was getting right to the point. Mandy sighed and then asked Billy if he wanted something to drink which he politely consented to and said yes.

Her father felt like his spotlight was taken momentarily so he shot her a look. Mandy shot her father a look back before going into the kitchen to get a glass of water with ice for him.

He was going to need it after Rick got done with him. Her dad had a way of making people's mouths go dry and feel suffocated due to the intensity of his no nonsense talks.

"Yes, Sir." She recalled him using that term often with his father Neil. Something that had been programmed into him she guessed.

Billy nodded as Mandy left the living room trying not to follow her with his eyes. Mandy was looking so hot tonight he would let her father choke and pummel him if it meant he got to take her out with him. He noted how good she looked in her black lacy dress that went just above her knees. She had knee high stockings on and dress shoes that matched the dress.

Her makeup was minimal but really accented her features. He wouldn't let on to it but he had found himself breathless at how nice she looked when she answered the door. He wouldn't dare look at her

with lust in his eyes with her stern father in the same room so he kept it in check.

"Good. Now there's only a few things you need to know. A few simple rules to follow when taking my daughter with you." Billy sat listening to every word, hanging on them seriously.

"One, you respect her at all times. I would go so far as to say you know that 'NO' means 'NO' and sometimes it even means 'HELL NO'."

He looked at him with sharp eyes and Billy nodded not breaking eye contact with him.

"Two. My daughter is to be home at a reasonable hour. That means 9:30 to 10:00 PM. This is NON negotiable."

Billy agreed as Mandy walked back in and handed him a tall glass. He looked away from her father only to thank her for the drink. He was so nervous he didn't even attempt to take a drink he just held it in his hands that were slightly trembling giving him away.

Mandy kind of laughed to herself at how serious he was being while he was glared at by her dad. It was kinda funny and cute to see him so unlike his usual charming flirtatious self. He sat perfectly still and had his full attention on her father once more.

"Three. If I get ONE complaint. Just ONE from her upon her return. Well... do me a favor, Hargrove."

Mandy braced herself knowing what was next.

"Take a look over the fireplace right there for me. Would you do that for me?"

Dad was really letting him have it. Mandy shifted nervously in her seat trying not to sigh or roll her eyes.

Billy's big blue doe eyes followed her father's gaze to the hunting rifle that rested there.

"See that? That's Mr Buck Killer. I haven't used him in a long time, kid. Mostly on bucks when hunting. It would be a shame to have to

use it for something... else entirely."

Billy winced at being called kid but he swallowed back the humiliation and bit his tongue looking at the rifle and then back to her dad.

"Don't... DO NOT give me a reason to. I have a big back yard. I'm a respectable man around here, all the townspeople love me. I've never been in trouble with the law and I've never done time. Don't give me cause to change that. Chief Hopper is like a brother to me, and if he knows how much I love my little girl, and he does, and I do, I doubt he would do much to me if I took care of a little... problem. In fact, he might just help me do it. We're both dads who adore our children so we understand these things."

Billy swallowed hard and nodded in complete understanding. He couldn't take his eyes off the rifle to save his life if he wanted to.

"Yes, Sir. I understand, Mr Hawkins. One hundred percent." Billy said flatly then looked back to her dad.

Her father's face went from a scowl of intimidation to immediately softening up with a huge grin. His sparkle in his eyes told Billy he was not one to be messed with and neither was Mandy. He almost looked half cocked and insane. Billy appeared honest to God terrified for a split moment.

"Good. Keep that understanding. Respect my daughter. Bring her home at a reasonable hour, unscathed, and like she was before she left here with you."

He was counting on his fingers all the things they went over and Billy was watching as he tabbed each finger to drive his point home.

"And then we won't have a problem. Sound good?"

Billy nodded without saying a word, frozen stiff and looking so small and helpless.

"If you have a fast car, and I know you do because I've seen that Camaro Rally Sport around town and how you have driven in it, drive safely with my daughter inside it. I won't hesitate to phone the

station and report a drunk driver or out of control teen. Kapeesh?"

He nodded and finally took a sip of the drink she brought him trying to hold the glass steady and not shake as he drank it. He set the glass down on a coaster and sat still like a soldier waiting to be dismissed.

"Glad we see eye to eye, son."

Billy turned to Mandy who was practically chugging her own water in the glass nervously and when he mentioned the big back yard and a cover up of hiding a body with Chief Jim Hopper she had nearly spit her water out choking on it. Billy did not miss her reaction and looked to her as if to say something but her dad snapped his fingers to bring his attention back to him.

"One more thing. Keep your eyes above her collar bone, especially when in my presence, or I might be tempted to injure yours. Alright. Have a great time together." He grinned pleased with himself.

Turning to Mandy he motioned for her to come give him a big hug and she did while smiling gently.

"Mandy, be smart and be safe. Come home to me in one piece or Hawkin's population count will be down by one point." He said that while glaring back at Billy.

Billy grimaced wincing slightly and waited to be dismissed. He tried to keep his smile and his cool but it was clear that her father's little talk had unnerved him a great deal. She had never before seen him so terrified although he hid it well.

Her dad finally reached out to shake his hand and they nodded with a silent look that spoke volumes of a mutual understanding. Mandy said goodnight to her dad kissing his cheek and followed Billy outside to his car. He was walking rather fast to it. She shook her head giggling softly.

As soon as they were out of earshot and halfway to Billy's car he let out a HUGE slow sigh and didn't even dare to light up a cigarette. She doubted he could with how his hands were trembling.

"Your old man... he's... well..." He cleared his throat. He was trying to

resume his badass facade but doing a poor job of it. Rick had really done a number on his thought process.

"Well, he really loves you. Is he... always this pleasant when you go out on dates with guys?"

"I don't date. This isn't a date. Remember that Billy."

Mandy said softly and Billy turned to her in shock before opening the car door on the passenger side for her. He had ignored that last bit but was caught up on the revelation that Mandy never went out with someone before like she was with him tonight. Even if she didn't regard it as an official date.

Her father's stern look was permanently fixed into his brain at that moment which would explain why he wasn't being his usually smooth self with her for the time being.

"Are you serious?" He finally asked before unlocking the Camaro passenger side door and opening it for her.

"I really don't. I never have. I just... I never wanted to."

She looked flustered and he gave a small grin as if he didn't really believe her. She nodded in all seriousness to him and he looked slightly shocked. A girl as pretty as Mandy and she had never before gone on a date? Ever? He motioned towards her house as if to ask if it was because of her dad and how he acted with him.

"No. Not because of him. I just never wanted to. No one had really ever interested me or made me feel like they were worth my time. I just didn't want a relationship. I DON'T, I mean." She caught herself on that one.

Billy finally regained his charm back recovering slightly and smirked at her. He was looking at her long shapely legs with her tights as she climbed in but when he looked back at the house and into the living room window he caught her father's form staring out from it looking right at him.

Rick made the 'I'm watching you' symbol with his hand and Billy froze in place for a moment before running over to his side of the car



and getting the courage to climb into the driver's seat. Closing the door fast he started the engine as quietly as he could.

When he did manage to get it going he slowly drove down the street keeping to the speed limit for once and recalling to mind the rifle above the fireplace and her father's rules for taking Mandy out. He was silent for most of the ride.

"Are you... okay, Billy?" Mandy asked with a hint of concern in her voice.

"Yeah. I'm good. I have all the rules for tonight burned forever in my mind. No worries."

He stared ahead and Mandy felt a pang of guilt. She didn't want him to be a robot the whole night. She wanted him to still be himself and have fun but just do it in a respectful way when it came to her.

She nervously placed her hand on his leg as if to comfort him and hoped he wouldn't read into it the wrong way. Billy turned to her for a few seconds and then looked at her hand then back into her eyes before returning his concentration to the road.

"Really. I'm okay, rabbit. I've dealt with worse."

He looked as if a painful memory had resurfaced in his mind and she frowned but took her hand off his leg and returned it to her lap.

If he couldn't open up to her anymore or be playful, which she kind of was missing at the moment, then she would never forgive her father. She knew he did it for her own best interest and safety but he really had a way with Billy the likes of which she had never seen.

He was so wild and untamable that to see him be so tense and quiet was very strange to her. However, once he put on some tunes as they cruised to Steve's place, she smiled feeling him relax a little bit more and become his natural self. As long as he didn't cross any lines she would be perfectly fine with him being around her.

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They pulled up at Steve's place after traveling the back roads of what

some kids at Hawkins Middle School referred to as 'Mirkwood'. It was named after a mythological forest from a J.R.R. Tolkien book known as "The Hobbit" which was a habitation for elves, one notably named Legolas, her favorite elf in the series. It was very dark with many trees making a thick forest surrounding both sides of the road and was lined thickly with straight and twisted trees. It looked very ominous in the fading light as the sun set behind them while traveling.

Mandy enjoyed the smooth feel of the tight turns Billy's Camaro made and how graceful and fast it was. He didn't speed too much but just enough to get them there before the sun fully set. It took maybe a half an hour at most.

It was now close to 7:00 PM and Mandy had hoped perhaps her father would have recieved a call from Nikki and her other two friends and explained that she already had a ride there because she had forgotten to call her and let her know before leaving.

She had been so caught up in dealing with the tense situation between Billy and her father that she spaced out and had forgot all about Nikki who was supposed to originally come get her with Alex riding along.

She could hear the music blaring from the backyard where the party was most likely taking place near the pool. Mandy was always envious of Steve's house and the fact that he had his own pool he could go swimming in any time he wanted.

She had only been over there once or twice before for a dinner with the Harrington's along with Nancy and Nikki. It was a very nice house and she expected no less given the status of Steve's parents wealth and their chosen professions. But it was almost like a museum in there. Super clean, lots of breakable decorations, but cold and empty devoid of the usual warm family vibe.

Everyone basically who didn't know Steve's home life viewed him as Mr Popular who didn't have a care in the world. But to those who did know him intimately he was labeled as the 'poor little rich kid' who's parents were never home and barely made time for him. Still, he took it in stride and kept his head up high, opting to be upbeat and a glass

half full optimistic sort of guy. He was fun and spontaneous and had a great sense of humor when he wasn't being a bully. That part of him had died down much since hooking up with Nancy.

Steve's smile, sometimes like Billy, hid years of pain. His bullying last year was an outlet for it. He had turned over an amazing new leaf once Nancy entered into his life and had started to rethink how he treated people. He had even bonded with some of the kids known as 'the party' from Hawkins Middle School that was right across the street from Hawkins high school.

Nancy Wheeler's little brother Mike Wheeler being a part of that group, she often wondered how Steve's friendship with them even got started. It was so unlike him considering the group of kids were nerds like her and he was so popular. She had never met any of 'the party' in person other than Mike through his sister Nancy during sleepovers, but she knew they were all very close. Just like how Mandy, Nikki, Tucker, and Alex were.

Billy parked the Camaro in an open spot on a very wide driveway. The big grey mansion like house was surrounded with thick trees and other than the music it was very peaceful and isolated.

Cars lined the road that headed all the way to the house but he got lucky to find one so close to where Steve had his BMW parked. Stepping out with his long legs clad in denim tight jeans and his black leather boots, Billy walked over to Mandy's side and opened the door for her. How long was he going to maintain this gentleman charade?

They were no where near her dad now and she wasn't a snitch so she wouldn't complain to him regardless if Billy slipped slightly from the agreement he made. But true to his word he stopped being so snarky with her and was actually being civil to her. Well, until he would be by the pool where he had to put on a show for Tommy, Carol, and all the other popular crowd. At that point she figured she would just separate from him and gravitate to her own circle of friends allowing him his freedom to be him while she tended to more important things.

"Billy, I don't want you to feel like you have to be stiched to my hip

all night. Just so you know. You're free to do whatever, I really don't care."

He looked at her as if this had caught him off guard. Had he been thinking he had to chaperone her and stay by her side the entire night? She knew her father could be intimidating but she had no idea he would take it so seriously.

When she clarified this to him, she didn't mean to make it sound so rough and angsty when she said it.

Lowering his sunglasses and peeking over the tops of them at her he went back to his usual self. She figured it was his split personality, a character he had developed to mask how he truly felt inside, but who was she to judge? She had her own secrets and ways of dealing with sadness and insecurities.

He paused to look at her from his side of the car like he wanted to say something. But he decided not to and turned to head toward the gate that would lead to the back yard and the pool.

She noticed he didn't have any swim trunks on so she guessed he wouldn't be swimming as much as he would be drinking and smoking. .

"That's not going to be a problem, princess. My part of the deal is still ongoing until I drop you off tonight. I gave my word and I plan to keep it. Don't try to keep up. Remember that there are degrees of separation between you and I, with or without you and your father's rules."

He began walking faster ahead of her on those strong legs making large strides. She frowned and glared at the back of his head.

*Yup, same old Billy. Whatever.*

She walked behind him but not too close. She was already going to get hell from Nikki for not calling her to tell her about this change in plans and she had to prepare for that. The onslaught of questions and jabs from possibly anyone and Tucker hating her was about to begin. This was going to be a FUN night. So she had to get her game face

on.

"That's fine with me. I could care less. We had a deal so consider it done." She shot back at him and he grunted at her not bothering to turn around or further the conversation.

How he could go from being charming, to being nervous, to being an asshole at the drop of a hat was beyond her. He was very complicated and she was frustrated with his mood swings and his hot and cold attitude towards her.

Still, she decided to bite her tongue and not bother to confront him. Why did she care anyway? He got what he wanted and she was upholding her end of the bargain so she bet he could care less if she pissed off for the rest of the night.

Walking up the driveway she waited a few minutes before entering the gate figuring he would not want them to be seen entering together. But Nikki and her close friends would already know anyway she had gotten a ride with him. She would just have to beg them to keep their mouths shut about it not wanting any more trouble.

As soon as she walked in the gate, she spotted Nikki lounging by the pool. She was talking to Nancy and Steve on their own pool chair cuddling together. Nikki was all decked out in a cute two piece and cute sunglasses pushed up onto her forehead. She practically screamed and lept out of her chair when she saw Mandy approaching. Mandy laughed and braced herself for the tackle hug that was her signature greeting. It nearly knocked her over.

Steve took one look at Billy almost looking like he was angry but something held him back from saying anything and he was chill. Nancy put her hand on his arm in a silent way of begging him not to start anything and to just leave it be. Most likely she knew he was coming from Tina or Nikki talking about it to her and was trying to keep the peace.

Steve and Billy locked eyes for a moment, something almost secret passing between them, but Billy took his eyes off of him nodding slightly and Steve nodded in return. Soon after, ever faithful Carol and Tommy walked over to Billy handing him a beer. He had lit up a

cigarette and decided to hang out with them and ignore Harrington most likely not wanting to start anything on his own turf as that would be unwise. Also he knew that part of their deal was that he wouldn't irritate Steve and to leave him be from now on.

Steve was barely tolerating his presence here as it was but Mandy found it odd that nothing in words were exchanged between them and how smoothly they had separated from one another. What the heck was going on? He had been super ticked off earlier at his job over Billy making fun of him and now all of a sudden everything was cool between them? What about the gym incident and Billy pushing him around on the court? Was Steve just letting it go? Or had Billy done what she asked and had apologized to Steve after all?

The pool was surrounded by stragglers of people drinking, laughing, some were in the water and some were out of it just socializing. The main hub appeared to be inside the house through a wide sliding glass door where a lot of people were dancing. Steve's house wasn't so empty or quiet anymore. If anyone broke anything in that house, she bet his parents would ground him forever or send him to a Military Boot Camp. RIP King Steve.

"Oh... my... gawwwwwd! Mandy!" Nikki gushed holding a tall glass with a drink in it and a little paper umbrella floating inside. She looked like a movie star.

She giggled and was admiring her cute black dress and her shoes. Mandy smiled and waved to Steve, Nancy, Tucker, and Alex. Tucker was sitting on a chair staring at the pool. He had noticed Billy walk in and then Mandy walk in shortly after. He looked upset but tried to smile at her to hide it. Mandy bit her lower lip and felt bad.

"Hey! Sorry I didn't call to let you know. I assume my father told you?"

Mandy walked over with Nikki to their social circle and sat down with them greeting Alex and Tucker more formally while apologizing to Steve for bringing Billy here. Steve shrugged it off and took a sip of his beer can and leaned into Nancy who had her arm around him.

"Naww... don't sweat it. It's cool. I just hope he sticks with Tommy

and Carol. He knows not to start any crap while here and he's not bothering me so... it's all good. As long as he doesn't start anything then I'm not worried."

Steve ruffled his hand through his long silky hair with his face looking the opposite of what he said while continuing to act cool about it. It was clearly eating at him slightly but neither one of them escalated or jumped on each other. Billy ignored him and their crowd altogether sticking to what he knew and who he knew. He wouldn't leave Tommy or Carol's side.

Tommy and Carol recieved him all smiles making small talk with him already. He took the beer they gave him earlier and cracked it open instantly downing the first one quickly. He let out a loud burp and Mandy rolled her eyes. He would be drunk within minutes no doubt.

Nikki turned to Mandy bringing her out of staring at Billy and explained that she didn't speak to her father but called and got no answer so she just assumed Mandy simply wasn't coming. She was almost convinced Nikki didn't put two and two together about Billy showing up with his loud car and then Mandy walking in but it was hard to get anything past her.

"Did you arrive here with... Billy?" Nancy asked with an incredulous look on her face beating Nikki to the punch of what she looked like she had wanted to ask.

She was trying to whisper it so Billy and his group didn't hear. Mandy caught Billy looking over at her for one second while taking a drag off his cigarette and listening to Tommy go on and on about the basketball team and the coach's plans for practice. Their first big game was coming up soon.

Carol looked bored while she popped and chewed her gum but was happy to see Billy all the same. Mandy noticed Carol looking at her with a glare but she turned her eyes away eventually and didn't say anything. She just got this scowl on her face but replaced it with an evil smirk shortly after when Tommy whispered something in her ear. Most likely something about Mandy. Billy turned back to them pretending not to notice her standing there with her own friends as if she didn't exist.

"Ummm..." Mandy began but wasn't sure how to answer.

She looked at Tucker who was now at the edge of the pool with his legs hung over inside of it. He had taken off his shoes and socks and was letting his feet dangle in the water and only had his swim trunks on now. He must have slipped out of his clothes to enjoy the water while she was distracted. His body language suggested he was depressed and upset while overhearing what they were saying.

Others were taking advantage of the pool and splashing each other playing around. It was still plenty warm out tonight for a swim and she knew Nikki most likely would not let it rest unless she put on that damn bikini and went in the pool with her.

"No. Well... kinda. I mean.. I'm not WITH him with him. He just... gave me a lift is all. A mutually beneficial thing. We have an arrangement I guess but it's NOT a date or anything. Which is why he's staying away from me." She was talking fast trying so hard to get them to believe her.

She tried to make it sound less intimate than it actually was and to downplay it as much as she could. They could practically hear the defensive emotions dripping off of her and Nikki gave a small knowing grin. Billy had been looking over as if straining to listen intently. He glared at her. He was more than likely just making sure she wasn't telling them anything that made it sound like he was involved with her in something serious.

"He met your dad, didn't he?" Nikki grinned and laughed. It wasn't fair how well she knew her and how her family was. She blushed giving away the answer not bothering to deny it.

"Why? What's in it for him?" Was all Steve asked in reply and she wasn't sure how to explain it while stumbling over her words whenever she tried.

"I guess... he figured that if I brought him here with me... then you would take it as he was a guest of mine and would let him stay and not make him leave."

Tucker snorted at this and clearly was not buying it. He was



clamming up again. It was evident he still wasn't over their argument in her room and his jealousy of Billy was growing by the minute.

"But all he had to do was come with Tommy and Carol." Steve interjected. Even though he hated Billy with every bone in his body, he was still sort of friends with them and didn't want to piss them off either. So he was kind of forced to accept their newfound connection with Hargrove. Assholes of a feather flock together, he supposed.

She frowned but Nikki broke the awkward silence between them all and offered Mandy a drink. She politely declined and Nikki pouted.

Carol overheard and just HAD to comment.

"What's the matter, Aman-DUH? You a lightweight or somethin? Miss priss over here can't drink because daddy won't allow it?" Carol had glared at her and laughed making fun of her choice not to drink any alcohol. Tommy followed in line and Billy was silent not even commenting.

"No... it's not that. It's just... well." She stammered trying to find what to say to something like that and to someone like Carol, a girl known to rip people to shreds over their setbacks and single them out.

Tommy grinned while chugging his beer and looked at Mandy in a way that made her very uncomfortable, much like Billy only more intimidating and nasty. He was doing it right in front of his ex like the oh so classy guy he was. Mandy sighed and pursed her lips.

"If the freak doesn't want to drink then who cares? More for us." Tommy said still eyeing her up and down. She wanted to punch him right in his freckled face.

He smirked and looked to Billy for approval at his jab that he took at Mandy. Billy simply responded by taking a long drag on his cig and shrugged. He was keeping to their deal. He was not going to start shit with her or disrespect her. But he wasn't exactly stopping Carol and Tommy from ripping into her either.

Nancy sighed and Steve did his best not to say something but it was clear his agitation was raising slowly. Mandy was Steve's close friend

just as Nancy, Nikki, Alex, and Tucker were but at the same time he was still friends with Tommy and Carol as the group of most popular kids. They had appearances to keep up despite how they truly felt about each other, even though everyone at the party didn't know why.

Mandy decided not to respond to their taunts and asked to go inside with Nikki to get a non alcoholic beverage and Steve said that was fine telling her where to go to find one. He was engrossed in spending time with Nancy who had clearly already proven her worth to Tommy and Carol at her first party the night Barb went missing, so they really had nothing negative to say in her direction if she drank or not.

Alex hugged Mandy and said he was going into the pool for a bit. Nikki remembered the bikini and gushed, forsaking her need of a drink, and instantly dragging Mandy into the house to change into it in the bathroom. She explained she would probably have to help with the impossible criss cross ties on the back of the top.

As she took her by the hand Mandy looked back at Tucker who was upset but Alex was trying to cheer him up by splashing at him in the pool and making goofy noises and faces. He smiled for a bit and laughed which made Mandy feel better. Alex was always so good at breaking tension and clowning around making others laugh.

She bet he knew about their fight because she told Nikki and Nikki had most likely told him. He most likely had asked her what was wrong with Tucker. He was trying his best to be the comic relief and defuse the mounting angst and tension.

Mandy couldn't help but glance at Billy before leaving the pool area with Nikki who for all intents and purposes was giving her the cold shoulder. She guessed he was being this way because of Tommy and Carol and their deal but he did look at her for a brief moment when she passed by. She barely caught the look from under his sunglasses but it was there unmistakable.

If his only way of respecting her was to ignore her that seemed rather extreme and deep down she didn't like it at all. She almost wished he would tease and mock or say something, anything, mean to her with

the others because the uncomfortable space and silence between them was deafening even over the loud party music.

He looked torn between wanting to flirt with her and approach and not wanting his cool friends seeing him even socialize with the likes of her. It pissed her off that he treated HER like SHE was a stain on HIS reputation as if she wasn't good enough to be spoken to or even slightly acknowledged.

Nikki showed Mandy upstairs and as they went up she saw most of the other people at the party were indoors where the music was blasting and the food and drink was laid out. People were getting their snack on and Mandy felt her stomach grumble slightly.

She tried to delay the inevitable by asking Nikki if she could get a little bite to eat first but Nikki stopped to snatch up a cold soda can in a bucket of ice and some chips and dip on a plate for Mandy then continued to pull her up the stairs to one of the big bathrooms. With the size of the bathroom Mandy guessed it was the Master bathroom attached to Steve's parents room which was even larger than hers at home. Nikki shut the door behind them and locked it.

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## **12. The Black Bikini & The Bet**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

**THE BLACK BIKINI & THE BET**

**(STEVE'S POOL PARTY PART 3)**

**Summary:**

Billy is ignoring her. Her father must have really put the fear of God in him. Either that or he doesn't want to be seen loving on her around his cool friends and is ashamed. Both situations are pretty annoying and infuriating.

Doesn't matter though as he is with Tina. Tucker is being moody a bit with her. Tommy has Billy make a crude bet over Mandy. Nikki drags Mandy off to change into that little black bikini which is all she's been talking about all week long. Mandy is nervous and not sure about it.

Getting her courage up she wears it. Billy notices. Definitely notices. A fight breaks out in Steve's house leaving just Tommy, Carol, Billy, and Mandy outside in the pool area. He can't take it

anymore. He simply must dive in and try to get her to give into him... maybe for a date? Mandy resists but just barely.

Mandy didn't know that Tucker saw it all... but Billy did. Tucker leaves angry. Billy is found by Tina and she is all over him keeping him busy tonight. Even without her, Billy is having fun being busy playing drinking games and getting drunk. He looks sad to be with Tina and not with Mandy but hey, he brought this on himself right?

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"Oh god, Nikki, what am I going to do about Tucker? He is so mad at me. Did you see his face?"

Mandy put her head in her hands then cracked open the soda and took a sip of it hoping the cool refreshing taste would help her to relax a little bit. She hadn't bothered to touch her chips yet as she was suddenly losing her previous appetite due to her growing anxiety over the situation. This was exactly why she HATED coming to parties.

Nikki was rummaging through her bag with her back to her as they talked.

"Well... can you blame him? You walked in with Billy, the guy he hates being around you the most. Even I can tell you two arrived together. Is it really not a date? Oh, you MUST tell me! What is it like riding in his car? Is it fast? Is it super awesome? What kind of driver is he like behind the wheel? I bet he is dangerous but super cool at handling it!"

Nikki's mouth was running a mile a minute full of questions and Mandy simply couldn't keep up. Her friend pulled out the infamous black bikini from a bag she had carried up with her and showed it to Mandy. It was a cute two piece that had low hanging shoulder straps that would fit around her upper arms and there was a criss cross pattern on the back that you had to lace up. The bottoms had two ties, one on each hip, and the design matched the top. It was all black with a hint of white in certain spots but for the most part it was a very sleek dark looking swimsuit.

"Taaaadaaaaa!" Nikki exclaimed shaking it excitedly.

Mandy's eyes went wide at how revealing this two piece was going to be on her and almost spit out her soda.

"No. Nikki, that is way too skimpy..." she started to protest but Nikki put her hand on her hip and gave her a look that said she was going to wear it or else.

'Mandy, come on. It's not that bad. I hand picked this one out for you myself so I know it fits your size." She laughed and Mandy asked a stupid question of how she knew that forgetting about their times wandering the mall shopping together and trying on fun outlandish clothes they wouldn't actually buy. Well, Nikki would. But not Mandy.

"How?" She said sipping her soda nervously while eyeing the two piece, her heart in her stomach at imagining herself wearing it.

"We've gone shopping together, derp derp, so of course I KNOW your size, remember? This will definitely match your bra measurements."

Mandy blushed and took the two piece from Nikki putting her soda can down. She was cursing under her breath the entire time she was putting it on which only made Nikki laugh while walking out of the bathroom to give her privacy to change.

When Mandy was done she opened the door and was thanking the heavens above she had recently shaved her legs. She put her arms and hands over her breast and torso trying to cover up.

Nikki walked behind her laughing and tying up the criss cross ties in the back to help her tighten it up a bit. She was most likely trying to make Mandy's breasts pop and look more full until Mandy protested asking her not to lace it so tight.

This bikini was making her feel practically naked and she hated it. Nikki looked and made her jaw drop then gave a wolf whistle at her which made it even worse and made her face turn beet red.

"Wow, you look so good in that! Hargrove is going to eat his heart out when he sees you. You fill that out so nicely."

Nikki chuckled and Mandy gave her a look as if she was forbidden from bringing him into this.

"This isn't for him. It's NOT a date, damnit."

She was now fiddling with the strings and swallowing hard looking in the mirror putting her hands on her stomach as she turned to the side. She was realizing just now that there wasn't much holding it together and on her hips. Someone could easily just tug and pull and that would be the end of her decency let alone her social life and reputation as a prude they all loved to label her as.

"Okay, fine, whatever. But he is still going to flip the fuck out when he gets a load of you."

Nikki practically cackled at the thought of it. Mandy just stood there looking in Steve's parent's bedroom mirror and frowning. The top fit but it was kind of snug. She was playing with it trying to adjust it until it was a bit more functional but no matter what she did it was still revealing her cleavage and she lowered her head giving up trying to make it more modest of a cut.

Before Mandy could protest and try to put her dress back on over it Nikki had grabbed her other clothes and stuffed it in the bag then grabbed Mandy to bring her downstairs and show her off. Nikki was way too exciteable over the littlest of things and too eager to show off her best friend's bod to all the guys at the party.

It wasn't until they had flew down the stairs and opened the back patio doors to the pool area that Mandy realized one of those boys would also be Tucker. She groaned and facepalmed and walked out extremely shy and embarrassed unsure of how to hold herself. She had one arm draped over her bare midriff and holding her other arm. She tried to let her thick black lengthy hair cover most of her body to hide her curves but it wasn't working out too well.

Alex and Tucker were still horseplaying in the pool and Steve and Nancy were making out. A few guys stopped what they were doing when they happened to glance in her direction and were beginning to practically drool at her. Some removed their sunglasses nodding at her and grinning as they walked by. With her body almost practically

bare and her long black hair wisping around her shoulders and hips she was obviously an object of desire.

*Damnit, Nikki. Why do you do this to me? How do you talk me into these things?*

Her face was burning up with how they stared and she tried to ignore it but she couldn't help but see they were staring.

She tried to hold her chest to cover it or snatch up a towel from the chair to tie around her hips but Nikki slapped her hands away and wouldn't let her with a playful laugh. Despite her better judgement, maybe more out of fear than actually wanting to know where he was, Mandy's eyes scanned the pool party crowd for Billy to make sure he wasn't anywhere near her to look. Just as she thought she was in the clear because it seemed fate had other plans.

At first she thought maybe he was at his car with Tommy and Carol smoking but when she looked behind the pool towards the back yard fence surrounding the property, that is when she saw him leaning up against it with his arm around a girl and flirting with her. Tina hadn't arrived yet so he was already doing his thing.

She rolled her eyes. He sure didn't waste any time to pick someone to prey on. All she could keep thinking was 'poor Tina'. Despite her being higher in status than Mandy she was never cruel to her so she didn't deserve this at all.

Since his two followers weren't in the pool area she assumed Tommy and Carol must be inside dancing to the music or getting food or more drinks for them. Billy was highly invested in his female target as he laughed and chatted with her while drinking but when he looked over and caught a glance of Mandy his eyes went unreadable at first and then blank with lust almost instantly.

His mouth was agape slightly and she blushed at his reaction to her wishing he would go back to flirting with the girl beside him. Even in the space between them she could tell he was checking her out with his eyes on every inch of her. He was biting his lower lip and grinning like an idiot and pushed his sunglasses down his nose slightly. She turned away not wanting to see him stare at her



anymore. Instead she focused on Nikki.

He watched her as she walked over to the edge of the pool with her friend. All of Mandy's curves were on display now and he was getting a good look at her for the first time without all those layers she usually covered herself with. He pulled his glasses off his face and began chewing on one end of them doing strange things with his tongue and not looking away from her.

The girl he had been flirting with, who was actually very beautiful with reddish hair and tanned skin, noticed him staring at Mandy and waved a hand near his face trying to put his attention back on her. She moved in front of him insistantly when he didn't break his gaze, which was the only thing that brought him back from getting a good eyeful and then back to looking at her. He smiled at the girl half apologetically with a flirty grin but practically glanced past her shoulders still trying to see Mandy.

Billy felt the urge to say goodbye to the girl and dive into the pool to make an excuse so he could get closer to Mandy but when the girl caught him not paying enough attention to her, she broke the conversation for him and called him some form of insult. Flipping her hair and walking off pissed she left him standing there alone seeing he was not interested in her anymore and shook her ass as she left as if taunting him that he wouldn't get a piece of her now.

He had called after her for a minute not even remembering her name but once he realized she was done with him, he cursed under his breath and looked beyond frustrated. Why had he been careless enough to ditch a sure thing for someone like Mandy who was basically a prude and a tease? He thought about this for a minute clearly upset with himself but he found he couldn't help but look back to Mandy.

Why wasn't she getting into the water? That would be the best way for him to close in on her but the water ripples would obstruct his view of her lovely and shapely figure a bit. No matter, he would still get an eyeful.

Licking his lips and about to head over, his mind went back to her father's words about respect and it instantly reminded him of a little

conversation he had with his own father Neil. It had been about respect and responsibility of treating Max right and watching over her.

When he had gotten surly with him over it denying Max as his family and thusly also his responsibility, his father had hit him so hard he gave him a week long bruise on his ribs and stomach that was just now beginning to heal up. His tan he gained from sunning by the pool helped to hide it a bit better than when it was in full swing.

Billy winced at the memory. Mandy's father wasn't as dangerous but that rifle he saw above the fireplace sure made him question just how far Mandy's father might go to protect or avenge his daughter should he put his hands on her and disrespect her.

He wanted so bad to start his flirtatious game up with Mandy and see if she would loosen up around him but all he pictured was her father's angry face and recalled his stern words to him.

He had promised to obey, both to Mandy and her father. This was killing him inside and was making him pent up and wild just beneath the surface. Like a caged animal being teased with a slab of raw meat and unable to reach it to devour it. An impossible itch he would not be allowed to scratch and it frustrated him as all hell.

Should he break his word and approach? Should he keep it and play it aloof and safe? What if Tommy and Carol noticed him cozing up to her? And if he did keep his distance, what if Mandy didn't think he wanted her and got too cold on him? He was working on heating her up and getting her ready for him. He had been all week long.

Damn it all to hell, he had a bad ass reputation to uphold as the biggest loverboy in Hawkins and to saddle up with Mandy would make them think he had gone soft for a girl.

So many barriers and obstacles in his way of his heart's desire that he hardly knew where to start. So he contented himself with sitting in a pool chair drinking and merely watching her from under his shades trying not to be too obvious. He noticed one of her guy friends swimming over to her and striking up a conversation with her. A slow anger burned and kindled inside of him. Was it jealousy? No. He

didn't get jealous. Ever. Over any female. Least of all someone like Mandy Hawkins.

Nikki sat beside her on the edge of the pool and put her feet in with her. They were chatting when Tucker swam over and hooked his bare arms and chest on the ledge of the pool looking up at them smiling.

"Hey, Mandy. How are you?" He said softly, feeling sheepish for ignoring her these past few days.

When he saw her come out in that amazing bikini a pang of longing welled up inside of him and he felt he had to get over his stupid childish temper about her not feeling the same about him. He thought maybe if he played his cards right and was nicer to her that maybe he could still win her over just yet.

"I'm good, Tucker. So... you're going to talk to me now?" He looked down as her big emerald eyes had tried to search his brownish grey ones and felt ashamed.

"Yeah. I'm really sorry. I don't want to lose you, even as a friend. But I'm just hoping that maybe if you would give me a chance... we could still try."

Billy was amused at hearing this. He wasn't too far away so it was within his earshot. His lip curled as he watched and listened to the pining boy trying to get in her pants. Mandy was a hardened shell. A vice or a trap shut up tight. If he couldn't even get in there... this kid stood no chance.

His father always said never send a boy to do a man's job. He took more swigs of his beer and simply listened in silence covering his wandering eyes back up with his shades. He knew he looked good. Tanned, muscled, all sprawled out on the chair. A lot of girls were checking him out. He could have his pick. But he just didn't want to. He noticed Mandy glancing over at him nervously from time to time then turning away quickly. He kept grinning knowing she loved how he looked.

"Well... at least you're hanging out with me. I... I missed you Tucker. I'm glad you're not upset anymore. Friends?"

She put out her hand to shake his. Billy stiffened as he watched them make contact with their hands and even though it was brief, for some reason it still rubbed him raw and annoyed him.

"Friends. Unless of course you ever change your mind."

He slipped that one in slyly and noticed Billy eyeing them both. He gave a smug look as if to dare Billy and telling him to back off. The little punk was trying to be territorial with her.

Mandy hadn't noticed because she was talking with Nikki again and Alex came up pulling on her legs to try and get her into the pool. So many boys all touching and fighting over her and grabbing. Billy's blood was on fire but he maintained his cool demeanor, God only knows how. The dominant Alpha in him longing to come out and play.

*"Treat my daughter with respect."*

He heard her father's voice in his head again. But were these childish horny boys treating her with respect? He huffed and went inside to look for Tommy and Carol and possibly to get something to snack on. His gait was that of intense anger and yet held swagger and confidence even when angry. Mandy watched him go inside out of the corner of her eye.

"Tucker... if ever a boy could change my mind for something more, I guess it would be you."

She made sure to say that to where Billy could hear it. He was acting weird and him ignoring her was upsetting her. She wanted her words to cut into him. He paused at first but kept on walking barely giving it away if it affected him any. Mandy immediately felt like shit for using Tucker to get a rise and reaction out of Billy. It was low and it would give him false hope leading him on. She vowed not to say something like that again to him. He smiled and obviously took it to heart.

*Mandy, you are such a heartless jerk.* She thought about herself.

Nikki was talking about their plans for Fall months before it was even

officially Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Alex was still trying to tug Mandy into the pool and splashing her while Tucker was rested with his back to the edge as close to Mandy as he dared to get. Her words have given him new confidence but he vowed he would not blow it or make her upset with him again. He had to wait patiently if he felt he would even stand a chance.

When it began getting dark, Steve announced he was going to light the Tiki Torches his parents had bought to give them some ambiance and lighting. The pool lights were too dim and he didn't want anyone to have an accident.

Nancy followed him indoors to where the music was and Mandy had stood up to dry off her feet and legs with a towel. She was about to head to a pool chair to lounge when Alex and Tucker both piped up about her not getting in and were begging her to come enjoy the water. She looked around still feeling eyes on her and really just wanted to wrap a towel around herself and cover up.

When Billy, Tommy, and Carol had come back outside they kept to their own little corner by the fence beyond the pool smoking and talking. Mandy could tell that although he was listening to them that still didn't prevent him from keeping his eyes on her. It was the most uncomfortable she had been since the night he kissed along her neck and tried to touch her in his room. Just recalling it made her shiver and her heart pick up fast and unsteady rhythm with every beat.

"No, really, I'm good. I... I can't. I mean, I don't really wa-..."

Before she could finish her protest as she was slightly bent over still drying her legs, Nikki winked at Alex and Tucker mischievously and then as she walked by her on her way into the house, she lightly shoved Mandy with her hips causing her to pitch forward into the pool.

The boys laughed at this and it definitely caught Billy's attention. Now was his chance. He would either join in swimming and make a move or forever hold his peace and continue avoiding. But he had to wait until her two guy friends weren't hanging around her so much.

Mandy came up from the water wiping her long wet dark hair out of

her eyes as it trailed behind her and around her in the pool water. Her face was slightly sputtering and spitting up water. She blew her nose gently and felt the sting of the chlorinated pool water that had gone up her nose from the sudden shove into it. She whirled around and tried to splash Nikki in retaliation but she had already disappeared inside.

"Nikki... you... ugghhhh..." Mandy grumbled and then noticed that Alex and Tucker came over to check on her.

"You okay?" Alex laughed and was jumping on Tucker's back trying to push him under playfully but Tucker deflected and flipped him over instead.

"Yeah..." She coughed. "I'm fine. Just a little water up my nose, that's all." She gave a smile.

"When Nikki gets back out here let's all get her good." Mandy grinned deviously. She was actually having a lot of fun now despite Billy's way of giving her attention while also ignoring her.

Alex nodded and Tucker grinned agreeing to the plan. When Nikki returned Alex and Tucker got out of the pool and ran up behind Nikki lifting her up by her wrists and ankles while she screamed for them to let her go. But it was to no avail because they had resolved to throw her in regardless. She made a huge splash and came up for air leaving the pool and chasing the boys around it yelling at them. Mandy told her to be careful or she might slip.

"Now, now, Nikki, turnabout's fair play." She laughed at her friend's misfortune and whirled around in the water.

Billy saw just how happy and switched on she was. He almost felt bad that he hadn't been able to cause that happiness. Still, he went back to chilling with Tommy and Carol who asked him when Tina would be coming by. He shrugged not really sure and not really caring.

Mandy giggled in the pool with her friends and they all whooped and hollared while playing together rough housing in the water. Once they were done, the boys heard someone yell from inside and turned

to look.

It was Steve yelling. He sounded distressed. Someone was very drunk and trying to start a fight inside the house. Mandy's heart stopped. Was it Billy? She frowned but then breathed a sigh of relief when she saw he was still hanging out with Tommy while oddly turning down left and right almost every girl that was approaching him and trying to get his attention. She guessed he was far too busy drinking and enjoying his buzz to bother but it wasn't like him at all. Perhaps Tina was on her way so he had to watch himself.

"I better go and help him."

Alex said jumping out of the pool over the edge and Tucker looked at Mandy longingly, not wanting to go, but followed him to help break up the fight and try to stop the drunken roid rage jock from breaking things indoors.

"Me too, before Steve has a hernia or pops a blood vessel." Tucker followed waving to the girls. Tommy was definitely interested so he grinned and craned his neck to see what was going on for himself, Carol rolling her eyes being just as annoyed with it as Mandy was.

Nikki's eyes got wide and it was obvious she was next.

*Everyone was clearing out on her, what the hell?*

Mandy frowned.

*Gosh, people were so high school while in high school.*

She thought on that musing to herself for a bit.

"A fight? Oh, I have GOT to see this. I'll go check on Nancy too while I'm in there."

Nikki shouted with a spark in her eyes and made her way out of the pool grabbing a towel and running inside. The music was still going but she saw a crowd of people staring at the commotion inside the house. Steve was most likely beside himself at this point fretting over broken vases and valuables. It was highly unlikely he would survive graduation at this point.

When Billy noticed Mandy was alone in the pool he told Tommy and Carol he was going to go for a swim. Tommy smiled knowing exactly what he was doing. He looked at him as if he were stupid.

"Seriously? Mandy Hawkins? Why?" He asked wondering what Billy even saw in the girl. She was a little nobody and he literally watched Billy turning down hot pieces of tail left and right for a solid twenty minutes or so.

Carol took a puff on one of Billy's cigarettes and exchanged confused and annoyed glances with Tommy who was slack jawed and heavy lidded from being way beyond buzzed. He had brought his own flask and fished it out of his pocket earlier drinking stronger stuff than what Steve was offering.

"Why else? Did you see her in that bathing suit? She is RIPE for the picking. No guy here could handle a body like that, except me."

Billy boasted putting out his cigarette and running his fingers through his long curly blonde hair. He began taking his boots, socks, and jeans off to reveal his swim trunks underneath. Thank goodness he wasn't too excited over her for all of them to see.

Removing his leather jacket and pulling his red buttoned shirt off of his toned chest he laid them over the pool chair and made like he was going to dive in when Tommy's hand shot out and grabbed his wrist. Billy turned and glared at him looking at his hands that dared to grip him. They locked eyes and Billy was about to clock him if he didn't let go.

"Tommy, you better remember your place. Get your hand off me or I will break it off." He growled at him and Carol looked nervously between the two of them. Finally, Tommy let go but didn't stop grinning at him.

"You're barking up the wrong tree, cherry hound. She won't put out. She's not only a freak but she's a stuck up prude too. You won't even get to the ball field with that one let alone first base."

He was slurring his words and looked angry at Billy for choosing her. Why? What was it to him?



Billy shot him a look with his feral blue eyes and wanted to pound the crap out of him for pulling that with him. His look was fierce and Tommy backed down but still kept his drunken twisted smile on his face.

"No one can resist me, Tommy. I can have any girl I want. It's none of your business who I choose to chase after so remember that I am in charge here." Billy spat out with a menacing glare at him. Tommy gave a drunken laugh almost mocking that he was shaking in his shoes. Carol saw if he didn't tone it down there would be another fight. Right out here between the two of them.

"Chill out, guys, c'mon." She said nervously trying to stop them from being at each other's throats. They both ignored her and she sighed.

"I bet you fifty bucks you won't seal the deal." Tommy laughed his freckled face grinning widely at Billy.

"You're on. Put your money where your mouth is, Tommy." Billy growled at him and this made Carol roll her eyes at their lame bet. Tommy pulled out his wallet and flashed the cash to Billy to prove he could. Billy didn't have to. Tommy knew he wouldn't say it if he couldn't back it up.

"Alright. It's a sucker bet. You can pay me as soon as you strike out." He took a drag on his cigarette and laughed softly.

"How long do I have? What's the terms?" Billy sneered his body language stiff. He looked to Mandy seeing his time to get over there was being wasted on this childish crap.

"By graduation. I'm feeling generous." Tommy smirked. There was something in his eyes that told Billy he was seriously counting on him failing.

"Let him go after the freak, Tommy, it's his time to waste." She popped her gum and was amused at this bet but her words were also laced with a hint of jealousy and Billy grinned at the both of them.

"I won't lose. I NEVER lose." He said, his ego swelling with pride and his voice oozing with confidence.

"You have to bring proof. If you do get all up in that, bring a pair of her panties and make sure they aren't a clean pair, if you catch my drift..."

Tommy eyed him with his challenge and stared him down.

"Fine. Sick, but fine." Honestly, he didn't care if he lost the money. Or if he didn't win the bet. He just wanted to shut Tommy up so he could go to her.

He turned away to walk to the pool where Mandy was sitting alone on the steps looking inside the house for her friends. He was eager to talk with her and get closer. That bikini was insanely sexy and he wanted a close up look.

When he dived in at the deep end and resurfaced swimming over to her, Mandy was now playing with the water trailing her fingers in it and curled up hugging her knees while waiting for her friends to return.

She was leaning her cheek on her drawn up knee and when she least expected it, she felt the splash of water from Billy's sudden dive into the pool before she even knew he was coming in. She gripped the railing by the steps and ducked down lower into the water sitting on the lowest step as if it could hide her body from him.

When Billy came up from the water he had a smirk on his face and pulled back his wet curly hair sliding it across his forehead and out out of his eyes. He began swimming towards her and she swallowed audibly wishing that Alex and Tucker were here in case he tried anything funny.

It was apparent she had not heard a word of what Tommy and Carol had been talking about with him or she would have been getting out of the pool angrily to avoid him. He took the bet out of pride but if she found out it would be game over before he even started. Hopefully those two could keep their big mouths shut and not sabotage his plans.

"Hey, rabbit. Where are your friends? Left you all alone out here?' He was swimming towards her, his strong body gliding through the

water expertly and with ease. She backed up against the steps as he approached. He stopped just short of the lowest step in front of her and simply stood there half in half out of the pool grinning from ear to ear.

"Umm... there was a fight. They went inside to help Steve. What do you want, Billy?" She folded her arms over her chest sort of angry with him for invading her space after ignoring her for an hour but when she realized it made her cleavage stick out even more she placed her arms back around her knees drawing them up to block his view of her once more.

"Just thought I would come and keep you company is all. Is that against the rules of our deal?"

His smirk made her want to shove a crap ton of water at his face so he could choke on it and she wanted to run out of the pool and grab that towel. Right now. The way he was looking at her made her tremble causing all her nerves to feel as if they were on edge.

"I guess not. As long as you keep your hands where I can see them. Like you promised."

She glared at him and it made him give a deep low laugh. This wouldn't be easy. The butt of the joke was on her, really. Of course he could put his hands on her now that she said that. She would be able to see them. They were in a pool. In clear water.

When he came near her on the steps, she could feel his body heat flowing off of him as he sat beside her, even in the moderately warm pool. The drops of water dripping off his face, his hair, and all of his muscles making little beads on his skin while running down along his sleek well toned body. Just as she had imagined it earlier and twice as amazing as she had seen in her mind's eye.

His eyes were reflecting the water and the tiki torch flames. His soft full lips and his cupid's bow even more lovely up close to her. Each time he had come in for a kiss denied she had seen just how beautiful his lips were. He was very tempting. It was still on her mind when he would try to steal that kiss he had claimed he would come for.

He flashed his white teeth at her with a wide grin because she was looking at him and taking in all of his features and he knew it. His curly wet hair was dripping beads of water and it rolled down his clavicle and his pecks to rejoin the rest of the pool.

Her eyes unbiddenly lowered to his strong taut stomach, his four pack, and his belly button. Before she looked even lower and below the waistband of his red swim trunks, his lifeguard colors, she looked away stopping herself from checking him out. Her face was red and heated. To escape him she waded out into the water and swam in the middle her back to him pretending she wanted to be in the water and not on the steps.

Tommy and Carol were watching and laughing each time Billy was denied by Mandy and they decided to go inside and let him do his thing. It was now just Mandy and Billy in the pool, alone, with the starry night sky above them which also reflected lightly on the pools surface.

"Where are you going?" He asked sitting there with his hands on his knees.

"Isn't obvious? Away from you, Hargrove." Mandy shot back flatly.

He narrowed his eyes at her and sighed. Why was she doing this? Hot and cold all the time. Hot in his arms one moment, cold and pulling away the next. He could make no progress with her like this. She wasn't being fair.

"You know, you make no sense to me. First you pass notes about me with your friend in class, most likely discussing how you want to jump my bones. Then you come to see me in the gym just to watch me play in my gym shorts showing my body off to you. Next you invite me to your house for a movie night, tricking me to hangout with your whole family, and then to be alone with me on the couch letting me put my arm around you and then my lips on you, even moaning softly when I do it."

That earned him an angry look from her. He almost laughed.

"But as if that isn't enough... you touch me on my thigh in my car on

the ride over here. You even took the time to get angry at me ignoring you so much that you used one of your friends to try and get to me. Now you get pissed at me for trying to be near you and you push me away?"

Mandy stared at him in disbelief of how he was stringing things together. He continued not stopping.

"Earlier since we arrived here all the way to now you have looked at me almost all night for not even speaking to you out of respect and me keeping my end of our agreement leaving you alone. Now you're in a sexy bikini teasing me in the water and when I do come to you, you get upset with me for approaching you? Just what is it you want from me, Mandy?"

He sounded like he was almost in physical pain with his frustrated words to her.

Her face scrunched up with a mixture of anger and shock at his full on recap. But she frowned knowing he was exactly right. She had been giving him mixed up confused signals all night if not all week long at school, not always entirely aware she had been doing it.

The last thing she wanted was to make him believe he even had a chance of hooking up with her, and yet every time he touched her, nuzzled into her, spoke to her, a part of her body had responded to him and he could feel it and see it. They both knew it was there, whatever it was, between them.

Apparently, she had failed at making that clear to him she didn't want him to touch her or come near her. She swam a little closer and this made him smile again at her and lean forward watching her intently.

"You know what they call that, Mandy? A tease. A fuckin' bonified tease and a flirt. Yet you want to act all 'holier than thou' to me. If you want to scrap the deal and stop being one like this, then you should really let me know. I'm right here. I'm practically throwing myself at your feet. And if you knew me better you would know that isn't like me at all."

He had her cornered now with logic. She knew what she was doing wasn't right. It should be a straight up no and cutting all ties. But she had deep down wanted to get to know him a little. Just... without all his other crap that came with him.

He saw her puff up with anger at his statement about her and silently cursed himself for saying it. So much for being smooth with her. But she stayed in the water and didn't get out to leave. She was thinking about this and it was clear he had spun her for a loop on with all his fine points.

Mandy stayed frozen in the water unsure of how to respond to that accusation and label. She knew it was being passed around about her at school. But to hear it coming from him... from his own lips. Right before her. It stung. It actually hurt. It really burned her up inside that he would insinuate she was being the tease as if she were putting moves on him. He had his nerve. All the moves made have been on his part. If anyone was teasing... it was him teasing her.

She gasped when she noticed he was getting off the steps to swim out to her before even getting her answer or if she would go off on him. His form was graceful in the water and he drew out his swimming slowly, approaching cautiously not wanting her to run away from him again. He paused just five feet from her and tread water keeping himself afloat awaiting her answer. In a playful manner he began circling her in the pool, like a shark, and she turned to try and keep facing him as he did.

"Billy, that was a dick thing to say. I'm nothing of the sort. I'm not whatever it is you are imagining me to be in that confused hormone driven head of yours." He smirked and kept circling around her and spit out water at her playfully while doing it. His smile showed her he liked getting the better of her. Calling her a tease definitely made him feel he had achieved that.

"Oh? Well, that's not what I hear. It seems you enjoy making guys get hot for you and then put them out without so much as even a putting out or giving them even a kiss. Was I the exception to that rule last night? You did that on purpose and then you pulled away. Even Juliet did more than that with Romeo."

He quipped recalling to mind the night of them watching the film together and how she knew every word of Romeo and Juliet's love story and their words to one another. Her face burned hot remembering how he had tried to kiss her mouth and then got her cheek instead when she moved at the last second, kissing her neck and jawline trying to make his way over to her lips while holding her on the couch. How he had been playing with and smelling her hair in the darkness lit only by the glow of the t.v. and moaning softly at her.

"Regardless of what you've heard, Hargrove, I don't do that. I honestly regret our kiss. And I will not agree to you having a second one either. Or did you think I was a liar when I told you earlier that I've never even dated anyone. I'm simply not interested." She shot back at him.

He was still circling her trying to find an opening to get closer to her. He was ruthless and in hot pursuit. She knew he was going to fail in keeping at least ONE of the conditions she had made him swear to before coming out here with him.

He had left Steve and her friends alone. It hadn't been him who started a fight tonight with anyone.

But his hands were itching to touch her again and she didn't know what to do about it. He was getting closer with each circle of her he made.

Would he try to use force? Would she have to yell for someone? Would they even hear her outside with how loud the music was blaring drowning out any cry for help she could possibly give?

His eyes were focused and wild, taking in every inch of her even underneath the water.

"Could you stop doing that? You're making me dizzy and it's very annoying."

It was the only thing she could think to say. He laughed not stopping his movement around her until she attempted to leave the ring he made around her.

Mandy tried to swim away from him once more and he effortlessly caught up to her and grabbed her wrist. He didn't do it rough, just a firm gentle grip while keeping her from escaping him. Why was panic in her eyes? She knew him. She had to have known by now he wouldn't hurt her or do anything against her will. He just wanted to be close to her, that's all.

Turning to face him she tried to pull away backwards, her long hair twirling all about them in the water, but he used the current of the pool and his adept swimmer's body to swim towards her. He gently backed her up against the edge of the pool and had both hands up on the ledge on either side of her. She had guessed his weeks of being a lifeguard at the community pool had strengthened his prowess in the water with how he moved.

He trapped her there and moved in closer. She felt the water rippling between them tickling her skin. Giving up she realized she was now pinned with him facing her and he was slightly pressing closer to her. She felt their bodies make sudden contact and his warmth meshed with hers. She could feel his bulge pressing into her core beneath the thin red swim trunks he wore.

"I'm making you dizzy? That's nothing compared to what you've been doing to me, Mandy. I'm getting impatient. I know this isn't a date. But I want a yes or no on whether or not I can take you out on a proper one. What do you say?"

He loomed in getting even closer with his face just inches from hers. He bit his lower lip and was looking from her eyes to her neck and down to her chest. His look screamed that he wanted to kiss her. To take what he requested just hours ago.

Admiring her curves and her round lovely breasts that could barely be contained by the bikini top, he sucked in a breath between his teeth and slid one hand down as if he were going to place it on her hip underwater. She flattened herself as far back against the pool wall as she possibly could and saw the hungry look in his eyes. He was positively sinful and overbearing and his wet curly hair and bare chest made her stomach flutter.

She was liking his heat and the feel of him against her but she



wouldn't ever let him know. She could never. Maybe she was teasing him. Maybe she felt he deserved it for all the things he had done to her since day one of coming to her school and taking over her piece of mind replacing it with lustful fantasies about him she didn't want. Did she? Didn't she?

"Billy, I think you have me confused with the tramps you run around with. Again, I'm NOT interested. In fact, I am so not interested that I will be happy to go back to avoiding you just to prove to you how much I want nothing that you could possibly think you have to offer me."

He looked angry and his eyes flashed to her lips and then back into her green ones searching her as if to call her bluff.

"Playing hard to get can be fun. But it can only last for so long. I felt you and heard you when my lips were on you that night. You put up a good fight, but I think you want to be alone with me. I think you like it what I do to you. Mandy, go out with me."

It wasn't a request. It was a command.

"You want it as bad as I do. I can read your body like a popup book. Yes or no, Mandy, and be honest."

Her chest was tight and her breathing rapid. Then she felt his hand move from her hip to sliding along her stomach slowly in the water. Soon he was trailing his fingers along her abs and then back to her pelvic bone. He carressed her hip and pushed even closer into her making her gasp which elicited a rumbling low laugh from him. Just another more couple of inches lower and he would be at her apex stroking her inner thigh. Or was he planning on tugging on that thin little string that was all that was between him and her dignity.

"I said keep your hands where I can see them, Hargrove. Or did you not hear me?" She angrily spat out when he kept messing with her bikini string.

"Mandy... we're in a pool. You can clearly see my hands."

He smirked wickedly at her and she stopped with her words of

protest dying on her lips. She really should have chosen her words more wisely, she could not deny he was right.

"Mandy, again I'll ask. Let me take you out on a date. Just one." He attempted again as he pressed his warm body against hers more urgently causing a soft sigh to escape her lips without any way to stop her body reacting to his.

"I can't. I'm sorry..." She tried to force the word 'NO' out but his warm searching mouth had grazed along her shoulder for a few seconds as he returned his hand to run below her flat smooth stomach, teasing her by keeping it there and going no further down to her bikini line.

She now understood that this was part of his game. He didn't want to force it or force her. He wanted her to fold and give in on her own terms and of her own free will. Wanted her to make the decision and say yes. He wanted her to give him what he wanted willingly.

Just as she had guessed before, and what Tucker had tried to warn her about, he wanted to break her and have her beg him for more. To ruin her ability to say no to him. To play his game back with him and allow him full unadulterated access to her completely. Everything he did was done intentionally with the sole purpose of not allowing her to be able to think straight so she would give in to him and break down.

"Is that your final answer? Are you sure?" He said in between tracing his tongue and lips along her shoulder and biting it playfully while heading for her throat. This made her moan softly at the feel of his teeth gently sinking in as he left behind light marks on her. It rippled pleasure all throughout her body and straight into her core like hot white searing lightning.

She was breathing hard and all her senses were flooded with him as she tried to get the strength to swim out from under his powerful hold on her. She longed to get to the safety of her towel and to run inside Steve's house and find Nikki and the group, but she felt glued to him and unable to move away.

"Billy... don't." Her body was screaming with his touch and his trailed kisses and nibbles. She almost pushed itself into him wantonly but

very much against her will and better judgement. What was happening to her? Why did he make her feel like this?

He grinned and continued to press his lips to her wet soft skin and kissed a slow trail along her neck making his way to her ear, his breath hot and just as rapid and labored as hers.

If she was trying to push him away and end this, she was doing a terrible job of it by her needy responses to him and his touch. Her body betrayed her and her heartbeat revealed what he was doing to her as her brain screamed at her to escape. She couldn't will herself to tear away from him when he suddenly placed his other hand on her back and slid it up along her spine playing with and tugging at the laces that crossed the backside of her top.

He groaned into her ear saying her name as he felt her bare skin and pressed his body into hers with a need that matched her own albeit secretly. She could feel him grinding himself into her slowly. The water gently lapping at both of their bodies caressing them like a lover adding to the pent up desire that burned between them both. She couldn't deny their chemistry together, but she wanted to. Oh, how she wanted to.

"C'mon, Mandy. Just say yes. I'll take you someplace really nice. I'll treat you like a queen. I'll do things to you that no one will ever be able to do to you or for you but me. Would you like that?"

Every word whispered in her ear made her body vibrate and shot a stab of need straight into her. The sounds he was making as he touched her made her tremble against him and stole away all of her ability to resist.

He was just too much to handle despite all her alarm bells going off. Too close for comfort, he was manipulating the feral animal part of her mind and body activating it rapaciously. She could feel every hard muscle of him pressed into her softness and she was coming undone against him in a losing battle by the minute to remove himself from her.

Mandy gave another unbidden soft moan that escaped her lips when he put his other hand back down to her bikini line, playfully running

his fingers along the string that held her bottoms on and tugging at it as if he would tear it away. He didn't however. He was messing with her making her think he would.

"Stop, Billy... stop." She breathed out softly. He heard her say stop but he played it off like she didn't.

"I'm sorry. I thought I heard you say something. I could have sworn I heard you say 'yes, Billy, I would love to go out on a date with you. Pick me up at seven. I'll be waiting.' Is that right?"

He mocked as he put a hand up to his ear as if he had been listening to her actually saying those imagined words to him. He went back to grazing his warm lips all over her throat moaning so that his mouth vibrated on her with each kiss and she felt herself getting dizzy from where his hands were carressing her at her abdomen. He was still teasing his fingers along her bikini line.

"I didn't... say..." She tried to deny his joke but she couldn't get the words out to rail on him for humiliating her the way he was doing.

"Huh. Imagine that." He said as he continued to kiss her along her soft neck passionately. He wasn't slowing down anytime soon, not until she would answer.

Closing her eyes she involuntarily leaned her head back which gave him more room to kiss her soft fair neck and he seized the opportunity to do so. He was now kissing under her chin and tracing his tongue down to the space between her collarbone eventually kissing the top part of her cleavage between her breasts. His breath was hot on her skin and she was melting against him feeling a wetness below that had nothing to do with the pool water.

He suddenly stopped and pulled away from her to look at her face which was turned upwards and frozen in an expression of sheer ecstasy. No matter how hard she fought she couldn't hide the pleasure he gave her barely doing anything at all to her besides light touches and what he considered soft innocent kissing. He smirked at her and enjoyed the sight of it. Enjoyed seeing her come undone and unraveled before him.

He also looked up just in time to see her little friend, Tucker, glancing out the glass slider door at them and he made it very clear with his expression to the kid that he was thoroughly enjoying Mandy in the water. Tucker frowned angrily while gripping a red plastic cup in his hand and looked away from them as he moved back somewhere into the house not wanting to see what he had any longer. Billy looked back down to Mandy to once more enjoy her facial expression as it was all knitted up in pleasure over him and what he was doing to her.

When Mandy noticed he was no longer nuzzling his lips against her or using his tongue to massage her skin, she opened her eyes slowly while panting softly at him. His blue sharp eyes dancing with amusement were locked onto hers and his lips so very close to her own again that he could just lean forward and capture her mouth with his. He could just take that kiss he told her he would have one way or another. But he didn't even attempt to as he just floated there with her in the water.

"You didn't say please when asking me to stop. And you didn't say no to my question. Don't make me beg, Mandy, it's not my style."

He groaned the words out panting with her as their breath mingled together with how close they were now when face to face. He placed his finger over her full lips and gently ran it along the tender soft flesh and the parting line where her upper lip met the lower one. He could feel that her full lips were just begging for him to put his hungry mouth there and fulfill his claim from earlier.

She accidentally moaned out softly when he stroked the smooth skin of her bare back along her spine tenderly with his fingertips. He ran them along the line of it all the way to her dimples just above the backside of her hips and cute full bottom. At first she thought he was going to take the kiss he wanted but he didn't come any closer other than teasing her with his finger to her mouth and keeping his eyes intently on hers while watching to see how she responded to him.

She was cornered. No one was around. Where the hell was Nikki, Tucker, Alex, Steve, or Nancy? Just how bad was that fight indoors and when would they be coming back?

She turned her head from him and looked around desperately for a distraction to use to get away but found nothing but him, her, and the water all around them. His face was urgent and eager as he held her stare captive once more by turning her chin to make her face him with his firm but gentle grip. He was waiting with abated breath, his body holding hers up against the pool wall not budging an inch to let her go until she answered him.

"Billy... please let me go. Let me think. I can't think when you're doing this. If I give you my answer tomorrow, will you let me go?"

She whispered it to him softly urging him to release her.

He briefly considered this. Just how truthful was she being that she would give him the answer by morning? He almost pictured her walking up to the door of his father's house and ringing the doorbell or knocking just to say one little word he desperately longed to hear.

Her response was to make him wait and let her think on it for a while then answer. It wasn't a no. But it wasn't the answer he wanted either. It was a maybe filled with possible time delayed promise but lacking any certainty should she double cross him and not follow through. He supposed it would have to do for now...

"As you wish, rabbit. Think on it tonight. I'll be waiting for your answer but I want it by tomorrow, no excuses. Date or no date, don't forget... I still want my next kiss. See you around, princess. I have a party to go enjoy."

With that he pushed away from her and withdrew his masculine frame from her soft supple one. He had said his parting words in a low deep whisper unmistakably laced with lust and longing and finally allowed her passage to move freely once more in the water. He was backing off and swimming away to climb out and towel off. The sudden feeling of him no longer pressed against her felt strange as if it was wrong somehow.

She gripped the edge of the pool to steady herself trying to collect and regain her composure at his sudden absence. He winked at her over his shoulder and left her to her thoughts which he had no doubt were all about him now. She would have dreams and fantasies about

him and in no way would they ever be enough until she finally surrendered to him.

He laughed at what a trembling hot mess he left her in as he was pulling on his jeans and putting his shirt back on. Finishing with his socks and boots he got up from the pool chair and peeked his head inside the house before walking in to rejoin the rest of the party people. Some of his fave music was playing as he cheered for it before closing the slider door behind him leaving her out there alone in the dimly lit pool.

How could he call HER a tease after what he had just put her through just a few minutes ago? Lost in her fuming thoughts Mandy let out a deep breath in frustration and swam shakily out of the water climbing out at the steps.

Tommy and Carol had apparently walked outside during the last few minutes of him messing with her and were standing there grinning at her but didn't say anything to her. Their stupid faces said enough and she didn't care what they thought of her.

Nikki walked out remembering she had a best friend out here after seeing Billy walk into the house. She felt bad for leaving her out here hoping Mandy was okay. She had brought her a towel.

"Hey, I am so sorry I got stuck in there playing a drinking game with Alex and a few others once all the commotion died down and people went back to having a good time. I didn't get to see much either. Too many people crowded around the ones responsible. The guys made them separate into different rooms in the house to chill out. I am so sorry, Mandy."

Mandy groaned at her friends failure to keep her word and stay close by her side but she tried to smile to her friend telling her it was okay as she grabbed the towel by the pool chair to cover herself with once she got out. She was dripping wet, flustered, aggravated, and really just wanted to relax sitting with her friends so Billy couldn't torment her anymore.

"That's okay. Let's just go in and find the others okay? I don't want to be alone out here or anywhere for the rest of the night at this party."

Nikki nodded apologizing again and told her she wouldn't leave her side for the rest of the night.

Fumbling with the towel, Mandy almost dropped it, which made Tommy and Carol snicker at her softly when they came outside and saw her shaken up. Their grins told her they knew why she was a mess but she ignored them angrily and finished up with the towel. Drying off her long impossible wet hair and her body she wrapped the towel around her tying it in a knot at her hip like a makeshift skirt until she could get back into her clothes from Nikki's bag in the bathroom. They both went inside together ignoring Tommy and Carol's laughter.

It was peaceful indoors, so Nikki must have been correct that the fighting issue must have been resolved for good. Steve looked happy dancing with Nancy in the middle of the room and Tucker was seated in the living room on a big comfortable tan couch drinking next to Alex.

Mandy knew and could tell Tucker looked angry and hurt. What she didn't know was why. Why he got the most ugliest scowl on his face as soon as he saw her. It was as if all her hard work and effort at getting back into his good graces had suddenly come undone and had been for nothing.

What Mandy also didn't know was that Tucker had been watching the two of them and their interaction through the back slider door on his way to bring her something to snack on by the poolside while seeing Billy making the moves on her in the pool. That he had seen Billy look right at him in the eyes with a dominant stare as if claiming her and making the statement that he was taking her away from him.

"Not a date, huh, Mandy? Nothing at all you want to do with him, right?" He had said while glaring down at his drink after taking one last sip. She froze in front of where they were seated and frowned with slight confusion at his cold words to her.

*Billy. Damn it. Tucker must have seen us. You kept going knowing while Tucker was watching, didn't you? You heartless ruthless asshole.*

He looked very hurt and angry all over again and Alex and Nikki



exchanged saddened glances between them. Tucker was now done with his drink having chugged the last remnants of it and although he appeared to be a little tipsy, he grabbed his keys from the key jar and took off. He wouldn't say a word to her as he stormed out of the house and out the back gate to his parked car to leave.

Her stomach dropped and she felt it was definitely impossible to please him and get their friendship back now. Billy was making it impossible for her to with the way he couldn't keep himself from being all over her.

"Tucker. I..." She tried to explain but he got up and on his way out the door to leave he had said something that would stick with her for a long time.

"Don't worry about it. I get it. I'll be okay. Do what you want because I sure as hell will."

He shut down on her and left her there in ruins over not being able to soothe or fix it denying further communication with him. It was clear he was at his limit with the whole situation and would not subject himself to be forced to sit there as a witness to Billy eyeing her all night. That is exactly what he did too while grinning seeing that Tucker took off in defeat, his point clearly made. Billy was constantly watching her everywhere she went at the party and whoever she spoke to. She was so angry with him that she mostly tried to keep to herself and her other friends in her own little corner avoiding eye contact with him as much as possible.

It was too much to bear and Mandy felt horrible for the remainder of the evening as the party raged on leaving her behind with all the fun everyone else was having. She felt she and Tucker would never get their friendship back on track at this rate thanks to Billy and his constant hounding of her.

Shortly after, Tina walked in with Carol and Tommy following her so they could meet up with a semi plastered Billy. He was drinking a lot and Mandy wondered just how long until he could no longer see straight. It almost made her worry for him but why should she? He was just playing games with her and she was fed up with it.

Tina had apparently just arrived, late to the party but looking nice for him, and she asked around looking for him. Steve pointed her in the right direction while keeping an eye on the drinking teens that flooded the house making sure they didn't go upstairs or wreck things. He looked like a frazzled babysitter watching a group of kids that couldn't control themselves.

When Tina found Billy in the crowd, he looked as if he were happy to see her, but as soon as she hugged him putting her hands all over him he looked over her shoulder at Mandy as if this wasn't really what he really wanted. He looked irritated with Tina so maybe what he said earlier about her not being his type and not wanting her was true. Mandy glared at him regardless for the awful thing he did to Tucker using her to do it and looked away letting Tina get her fill of him as she wished. He tried to get away from Tina and in turn Mandy dodged his approach to her when successful many times. In spite she would not allow it.

*Deal with it. You brought this on yourself.* Mandy thought bitterly.

If he had simply approached her first long ago from the beginning instead of playing games and exchanging numbers with Tina maybe he wouldn't be in this mess he was now. Like she cared. She was having fun with her friends and that was what tonight was really supposed to have been all about. His earlier groping of her in the pool did not sit well with her so now he could be groped by a girl he didn't actually desire and see exactly how it felt.

Mandy stayed with Alex and Nikki for the rest of the night occasionally dancing with Steve and Nancy and playing the non drinking games that were offered. She was trying not to watch Billy as he drank with others, occasionally with Tina hanging all over him, and put on his mask while he had his fun as if she didn't exist to him.

*Let him get good and drunk so he can forget all about me. I deserve that much and so does Tucker.*

Her bitter thoughts eventually ended once she was truly having fun with her friends ignoring Billy and his steady blue gaze on her. It was a miracle Tina never caught on and left his side for it but she guessed he was just that good at playing the field and not being overly

obvious about it.

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## **13. Just The Booze Talkin-A Risky Favor**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

**JUST THE BOOZE TALKIN - A RISKY FAVOR**

**(STEVE'S POOL PARTY PART 4)**

### **Summary:**

Billy gets wasted at the pool party. He almost accidentally lets it slip that he is way in over his head interested in Mandy. He gets so smashed that he cannot drive his Camaro home.

She has no choice but to take his keys, babysit him while hes plastered, and drive them both home doing something she knows he will be pissed about and that she will regret tomorrow if he ever finds out... drive his Camaro for him to bring him home to Old Cherry Road.

She doesn't want to.. she HATES him and fears him. But everyone else has either gone home or is far too drunk to drive and she is the only sober one that can. She sort of feels bad for him and offers to be the one to do it.

They help load him up in the car and she's a nervous wreck pulling it out of the driveway. He better not wake up...

Mandy hopes maybe he will effectively black out and not remember any of this.

NOTE: Can I just say... wow. What have I done? LMFAO. I broke myself writing and reading this chapter. Drunk Billy is my new fave thing and this is now my most favorite chapter I've ever written! :P

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Mandy had no idea just what arrangement Steve and Billy could have possibly come to in order for him to be there at his party tonight. After the way Billy treated him in gym practice that one afternoon, let alone at his very job and in front of Robin too.

She was shocked they were even tolerating each other. That was putting it mildly. They were purposefully and vindictively avoiding each other. A sort of 'you stay out of my way I'll stay out of yours' kind of unspoken agreement between them. Mandy was super jealous of that wishing she had that arrangement too with Billy but the more she would pull away from him the more he would try to draw her back in. And it seemed to work every time.

Mandy had been talking to Nikki and Alex trying to ignore Billy as much as she could each time they were in a room together. Especially when she was outside swimming while he was smoking and hanging with Tommy and Carol. He had approached her and tried to tempt and tease her in the water but she shut him down so he angrily got out and went to party without her. Fine with her.

His constant stare was really beginning to bother her as he knocked back drink after drink. The more alcohol he imbibed over time the more feral a look in his eyes he had for her.

Billy was licking his lips constantly at her like it was some sort of nervous tick or habit and rubbing his chin as if debating to approach her each time she caught his eyes before turning away. His calm heavy lidded expression betraying that he had no control over

himself as he looked her up and down.

When it got too much she changed out of her black bikini and back into her less revealing more comfortable clothing. It really did no good because it didn't lessen his eye contact with her at all. It was too late, he had already seen her body and what she had underneath and most likely he had it forever etched in his mind each time he would look at her now.

It made her very uncomfortable for him to be so forward with his gaze on her every move so that she began shifting in her seat and clearing her throat trying to look away from his attentions and how they pointedly fixated on her.

His shouting and howling earlier when he just got started partying had been wild and alert while having fun. He had played drinking game after drinking game with the guys. Eventually it caught up to him as it slowly faded into him being in a quiet and intense drinking mood. He was trying to keep his mask on but every once in a while it slipped showing he was very drunk and losing grip on his awareness let alone his equilibrium.

Every guy, including Tucker, that he noticed had talked to Mandy or even so much as looked in her general direction seemed to make him glare until Tina had looked his way to talk with him. Then he would wipe the look off his face and try to appear charming and interested in her making her giggle and snuggle into him. When she looked away he looked annoyed and bored. Restless even or like he was itching for a fight.

He must have done at least sixteen shots of the harder stuff and maybe five or six cups of beer before the night was fading. It would be sunrise in just a few hours now. Did he even have a sober driver to take him and his car safely home? She thought it might be Tina but she was looking pissed off at him and like she wanted to leave.

In about a half hour more, most of the partygoers had left, including Tina with Carol when she tried to get Billy's attention and he lazily slouched in his seat not fully giving her what she wanted while zoning out. She had gotten up deciding he was not going to be able to be receptive to her anytime soon unless he could sober up. Which

could be a while or the rest of the night, depending on the circumstances and his metabolism. Hopefully he knew his limit but Mandy doubted he did from the way he was acting.

Giving up on him, Tina left together with Tommy and Carol which meant only Nancy, Steve, Nikki, Mandy, Alex, and a few stragglers were left. Some of them sobering up and collecting their keys to leave Steve's place grabbing them from the key jar and others ready to pass out calling for rides from friends.

She felt bad for Steve having to go around waking up the passed out people and when she looked around at the utter mess that had been made she knew he would have a hell of a time straightening this place up.

Mandy offered to stay and help him clean up, as did Nikki and Alex, but he told them he could get help from some of his friends that were still at the party who were somewhat coherent and sober enough to clean just not to drive. Steve said his friends would most likely crash here once they were done picking up and returning the place to it's formerly spotless mausoleum like state his parents had it in before the party.

Still seated on the couch inside the partially trashed living room littered with plastic cups, plates of food, and random garbage, was a very inebriated Billy. He was trying to keep himself upright and alert. He was staring across the way at Mandy and still drinking from a cup like a champ despite his obvious impairment.

Nodding his head slightly, he was listening to the rock music that was now dialed down to a quieter volume. His eyes most likely sensitive from the well lit house and from drinking he put his sunglasses back on. Just looking at him was giving Mandy a hangover with sympathy pains even though she hadn't touched a drop all night.

It wasn't until she saw Billy get up from his seat and begin to sway in her direction as he walked that she realized with horror he was going to make a move on her. Instead of his usual pompous gait he was tipping slightly while coming over. He was pretty hammered and yet still trying to stay on his feet.

When she noticed that he could barely keep his eyes open let alone see straight he had approached her stumbling along apparently feeling bold and fueled by his drinking binge throughout the night. He didn't even seem to care that she was sitting with her friends trying to enjoy their company. He wanted her attention on him just like earlier in the pool.

Mandy had never before seen him like this. She had seen him buzzed but not full on smashed. It was a completely different personality he wore instead of his usual hardened or flirtatious mask, so it not only frightened her but it also made her feel sorry for him. Maybe even a little bit amused to the point of wanting to laugh to see him look so out of his element.

His usual cocky arrogant self had disappeared and had been replaced with an almost childish easygoing softness that was strange to behold. He almost tripped on a rug on his way over to her, so she had to actually stifle a small laugh covering her mouth and then straighten herself up to look serious and annoyed.

When he thought that she found something about him charming or amusing, he gave a shit eating drunken grin, making him double his unsteady efforts to come over to her. Mandy's eyes were wide seeing him draw nearer as Nikki and Alex droned on and on about random topics still sipping and enjoying their drinks. Their night was far from over. His was approaching clock out time.

They mentioned calling cabs for people but the place was too out of the way for a cab driver to bother going up such a painstakingly long private drive at this late hour. They resolved to keep an eye on each other and sober up before going home, having previously turned in their keys for Steve to hold onto just in case they got tempted.

As Billy leaned against random things to steady himself, no longer a girl on his arm or kissing all over him, whether Tina or otherwise, he struggled to keep his balance and almost fell over again. Mandy almost jumped up out of instinct wanting to help stabilize him but froze not sure what to do.

He finally made it and plopped down on the sofa next to her with a soft giggle that sounded weird coming from his mouth and then



leaned back with his arm over the top of the couch behind her. She looked away and tried to scoot further from him which only made him scoot closer to her in response, like a rag doll newly animated come to life and learning how to move.

He smelled very strongly of all the drinks he had been slamming as the night wore on and it mixed with his cologne and tobacco smell barely masking it. He paused looking like he wanted to rest his hand on her lap but decided against it at the last minute.

Suddenly remembering why he was there, he turned to her and spoke in an unintelligible speech Mandy could barely make out. When she didn't respond looking on in confusion to him not knowing what he said he tried again. She could see his struggle was real to be coherent with her.

"Hey... ssssexy mama. What's a place like... did you come here alone? You're lookin very... This seat... taken?"

Okay, clearly he had his beer goggles on to address her in such a manner. Her face was red either from annoyance or shying from him. Maybe both.

He was trying so very hard and it was all she could do to not burst out laughing, ruining the illusion that she didn't want him near her, which might injure his pride and shoot his ego down in flames. But he just sounded so ridiculous and hilarious in the way he couldn't keep track of what he was trying to say to her. He was getting his pickup lines all mixed up.

He gave a cocky side smile at her finally opting to shut his mouth up for a few minutes and just use his handsome looks and eyebrows to try and woo her.

"I want... to take you home... with me. I have... for a long... time. My dreamgirl."

His words were slow and forced and although he tried to keep his lovely blue eyes locked onto her they were moving from side to side slightly dazed. He tried to take her hand in his and fumbled with the contact trying to lift it to his lips. She just let him have his fun since

he was practically harmless right now anyway as incapacitated as he was. He wouldn't remember any of this anyway. But she sure as hell was making a fun mental note of it.

He looked at her as if he had stars in his eyes for her and was completely unguarded. Why was he looking at her that way? He was clearly way more intoxicated than she originally had thought. He couldn't possibly know what he was saying to her. Just making up stuff as he went, anything to get her attention.

"Okaaaay, how many have you had, Hargrove?"

She asked lifting an eyebrow at him which illicited a low rumbling chuckle and groan from his throat. He was blank for a moment trying to comprehend her question.

She found it easier to talk to him when he was in this state, he was much more nice, which was a pleasant surprise to her. It made him more relatable and calm when drunk than when he was sober. A sad truth Mandy was understanding all too well.

"Beer mostly." His grin was infectious and she had to fight giving him one of her own back thus encouraging him further.

"No... not WHAT did you have. HOW MANY did you have?" She said making herself more clear to him. He paused.

I... two?... twelve? I... lost count. ALL the drinks."

He used his hands sweeping them over the room to illustrate what his mouth was failing to articulate. He knitted his eyebrows together and looked up at the ceiling as if trying to remember and counted lazily on his fingers to try and figure it out but finally he gave up on answering. He laughed at his own ending to that sentence.

"You know... you're... you're... you're really kinda pretty... when you're drunk, Harkins. I like you like... this."

He was staring his big blue eyes at her almost lovingly now. Finally settling his sky blue orbs down to actually look steadily into hers. They were beautiful as always. So pure, so open, and so clear from being drunk she couldn't help but softly smile at him. Mandy was

startled to realize he was being completely honest with his feelings when in this state and it kind of scared her while also at the same time melting her for him. Staring into her green eyes unflinchingly he tried to reach out to touch her soft face but stopped himself. It would appear he was torn between wanting to touch her and somehow remembering he had to keep his hands to himself so as not to scare her off or make her angry.

His declaration was an accidental insult attempting to be a heartfelt compliment and was completely way off from reality. It almost did her in right there to release a loud snorting laugh.

"Thanks? Umm... but you're the one that's drunk, Billy. Trust me."

She replied trying to hide her amused grin and to look annoyed with him instead folding her arms. He had his nerve to try and be sweet on her just because he had been drinking and overdid it a little too much tonight.

He pouted and shook his head 'no' unwillingly to believe her and the truth of his poor state.

When he got her name wrong he tried to look serious and sensual into her eyes but couldn't keep a straight face. His grin was so wide it almost frightened her.

She looked to her friends but it was apparent that Nikki and Alex hadn't even noticed he was over here yet as animated and giggly as their conversation was.

Steve was busy attempting to pick up around the house doing damage control with a few of his buddies, Nancy helping him as best as she could. If he didn't get this house in order before the day was over his parents would bury him in the backyard themselves.

He suddenly look confused and upset.

"Wait... who's Billy? Did he... touch you? I'll kick his ass... " He tried his best to look fierce and tough as he said this and his soft gentle face was replaced with a concerned and slightly disturbed one.

He was looking around the room searching with angst filled eyes for

whoever he imagined to have put their hands on her not realizing she was talking about him. It made her jaw drop. What the HELL had he been drinking, and just how many, to not be able to remember his own name and identity? It must be hitting him way harder than she thought.

When he saw her look at him with worry he hiccuped slightly and then made her jump when he suddenly got loud and was laughing. This finally made Alex and Nikki look over at them and they laughed too seeing Billy acting like a little kid because of his intoxication.

"Haaaaaaa... oh boy!"

He shouted and began patting his hands on the sofa in a fast drum beat unsure of what to do with himself. He started laughing at himself at the sound of his own slurring lilting voice and words then leaned his head back against the couch stretching his strong neck out gazing at the loft above.

It struck Mandy that he looked handsome even when drunk the way he was so relaxed and leaning back. His strong chest and neck still beautiful in his button down shirt and leather jacket and his powerful arms at rest. His jawline was amazing and the lazy grin on his face making his lips look so warm and inviting. Drunk Billy was truly a sight to behold.

He finally relaxed once more and turned to look at her again.

"Do you want to know... why I like rabbits?"

His speech wasn't improving anytime soon and sobering him up would take a while. Still, she listened when he asked her to lean in closer to tell her the answer.

"Because I used to have one. And I loved her a lot. Shhhhhh. That's a secret..."

He put his finger to his lips to shush her and was doing his best to make a straight gentle smile but was curling up his lip one corner in a silly smirk. His smirke suddenly turned sad as if he was lost in recalling something from a long time ago that hurt him deeply. She

wondered over the rest of the story but when he leaned in and laid his head on her lap she was stunned and didn't know what to say or do when he looked up at her. He was fully sprawled out on the couch now just laying over her legs and humming softly while playing with her long strands of hair.

Her heart somewhat stirred for him and she shook it off ignoring it as a fluke in that he was only lovely when being nice. And only nice when being wasted. Nice and sober wouldn't go hand in hand so this was a rare moment that wouldn't last. She couldn't admire or like him and then be confused later by going back to hating him tomorrow once he was sober again.

"Okay... yeah... you've had too much. Let's go, Hargrove. We need to get you and your car home."

She tried to move him off of her pushing him gently so she could stand up but he gently grabbed her wrist looking up at her longingly for her to stay. It's too bad he was only soft like this when completely out of his mind from drinking too much. She actually liked this side of him and she realized that deep down he was sweet and funny when not being an ass.

"Don't... don't go..." He whispered up at her.

"I'll be right back, Billy. I have to ask if someone can help you get home with your car."

She managed to move him aside when he finally cooperated and then pulled away from him as his fingers slipped from her hand slowly attempting to keep grasping but failing to. His hand was warm to the touch and gentle like it had been in the mall and on her front porch. Her heart fluttered momentarily over it once more as the other times she had contact with his strong hands.

She asked around starting with Alex and Nikki nearby who seemed still plenty buzzed and they explained that they both had their cars here not being able to leave them behind. They apologized to her and suggested she ask Steve or one of his guy friends. So that idea was shot.

Making her way to Steve and his friends who were almost done barely straightening up the living room and kitchen she asked them too. When she asked he told her he had to stay and clean up the entire house and get sleep so that was out.

Mandy thought about dialing for a cab but then Billy's car would be stuck here and there is no way she would put Steve in the path of that raging tornado once he sobered up angrily realizing it was here and coming to get it from him.

Finally turning to Nancy, she said she came here with her own vehicle and it was her parents who didn't even know she was using it while they were sleeping. She had to get it back home in one piece so she couldn't do it either.

When she asked Steve if Billy could crash with him here he gave her a 'hell no' look on his face and refused. Their truce must not have been as fluffy and friendly as she thought. Still, she could understand why he said no. He absolutely detested Billy and wouldn't do him any favors after the crap he pulled in gym class constantly with him.

She threw her hands up in the air and looked helplessly back over to Billy who was practically about to fall asleep, slumped over on the arm of the couch and drooling slightly. She sighed and shook her head.

*Fuck. I'm going to have to be the one to do it, aren't I?*

Going back to him she successfully woke him to even more slurred half ass attempted flirting comments but when she tried to lift him she couldn't do it and he dropped back down on the couch almost taking her with him. She would not be able to pick him up. Not by herself. She tried to but he was far too bulky to lift.

She had to get help so she ran to Steve to ask for assistance. He looked at her as if she were kidding but when she pointed to Billy he saw that if he didn't he would not be able to get him out of his house.

She explained she was his only option now. Billy rolled off the couch and landed on the carpet, not even budging an inch with a heavy thud. It didn't even wake him. His cup still in tact not spilling a drop

as he unconsciously gripped it in his strong hand.

*How in the hell?...*

Hanging his head but agreeing Steve called some of his guy friends over and they helped to lift Billy off the carpet of his parent's expensively decorated living room grunting from the effort. Even for them he was pretty heavy to move.

Hoisting him up onto his feet, their hands under his arms, they carried him out of the house and past the pool area to the back gate. It took some doing but they eventually got him out to where his Camaro was parked outside panting and sweating from the effort. Billy was still half dazed so he didn't move much until he noticed they were propping him up against his car and asking where the keys were to unlock it so they could place him inside.

"Once we get him in there, you do know you're on your own to get him out of it and in his house, right?" Steve said wondering if Mandy had thoroughly thought this through.

She shrugged. What choice did she have? She couldn't just leave him there without any pillows or blankets in his car to keep him warm in the late night early morning hours. On top of that because of all the alcohol in his system it could make him get even colder and she didn't want him to get sick. No one deserved that. Not even him.

"Yeah. I know I won't be able to. I'll have to park somewhere nearby his house and sit with him until he sobers up. Then give him his keys back locking him safely inside once its warmer. He can bring himself in when he wakes."

Steve nodded. So she did have a plan. That was good.

Nikki, Alex, and Nancy followed them out in case they needed their help.

Billy overheard them talking and he looked irritated for a minute but was still slurring and rolling his head. She saw his tongue sticking out for a moment before he slid it over his bottom lip slowly smacking his lips in the process.

"I'm not... done yet." He still miraculously had his half empty cup of booze in his hand and she took it away from him before he could spill it all over himself or his car.

"I can do it.. myself." He tried to protest and fish his keys out of his jeans pocket but she looked him in the eyes and crossed her arms. He was being so stubborn even when shitfaced.

"You're not driving home like this, you're too drunk. And Steve is definitely not going to let you crash here. So since everyone else is too wasted to do it, I'm going to have to take you home tonight."

"Oh, baby... promises... promises..." He grinned his eyes looking dazed and practically crossed. He had a wicked smile playing about his lips being flirtatious with her even now. It almost seemed like he was going back to his usual self and recovering slightly.

Mandy dug into his denim pocket trying to find his keys and snatched them out of them before he could get to them himself. He slurred some comment about moving a little more to the left and how if she wanted to get into his pants all she had to do was ask. The girls giggled at this but she rolled her eyes unamused and blushed horribly.

All of them had to help push, pull, and lift him up in a team effort to put him into the backseat of the Camaro due to the tiny little side doors being the only ones the car had. Mandy told them to be careful and mind his head as they were ducking him down into the open door's frame on the driver's side.

They had two people operating his feet from his lower half on one side of the car door, Steve and his friend, and three others working his arms and shoulders on the other door which consisted of Nikki, Alex, and Nancy. All of them pushing and pulling together like pulling on a tug o' war rope to lay him out straight from door to door and slump him across the back seat. He was almost too long to fit properly but they made it work.

He was giggling twisting and wiggling making it very hard for them to get him in a laid down position in the back.



Billy was heavy for a teenage boy, almost pure muscle mass, and Mandy could only imagine what the raw power of his body could do if he were to pit it against the poor female he was flirting with amongst doing other things. She could imagine how the weight of him would feel on top of a girl. She shook her head of these thoughts getting pissed at herself for even having them.

"Thanks guys. I can take it from here. I will make sure he gets home."

She closed the passenger door and walked around to the other side flipping through his keys looking for the right one that would start it up. She guessed it was the one with the Metallica symbol custom engraved onto it and tried her luck.

Getting into the driver's side of the Camaro and shutting her door she noticed a flood of emotions. Most notably she was feeling really odd doing it. It felt really wrong to her. This was his baby. If she wound up putting one scratch, one ding, even one dent in it, hit something, or God forbid have an accident in it, NOTHING would stop him from tearing her apart for it.

She resolved to drive very carefully, slow and steady, and keep a solid eye on the road ignoring his bullcrap in the backseat at all costs if he woke up and started being surly with her. If he woke up she would simply pull over somewhere safe, put the keys on his seat, lockup, and sit tight with him in the car until he was sober enough to take over. How she would explain her being there with him she had no idea but she would come up with something believable.

"Good luck, girl. Drive careful okay? Call me when you get home so I know you two made it home safely." Nikki said blowing her a kiss and giggling at the sight of this. She was definitely going to have fun with this later when teasing her about it. Alex nodded and echoing her statement and put his arm on the frame of the door.

"You look good in a car like this, Mandy. I'm tempted to take a polaroid of this moment. For great justice!" She shot him a death stare look and he winked at her.

"No. No evidence. No one is to breathe a word of this, alright? Let him think he drove himself home and passed out in the backseat on

front of his house. If anyone squeals so help me God..." She didn't know what to say for a decent threat but they all got the point, nodded, and promised.

"We won't say anything." They all nodded and started to head back to Steve's place.

"Good luck and God speed, fair traveler." Alex said and made the classic Star Trek hand symbol to her. Steve thanked her for getting him out of there and said he would make it up to her somehow.

"You bet your ass you will, Harrington." Mandy said as she put the keys in the ignition and started it up. It purred to life and she kind of enjoyed the sound of it, having never been inside his car before to hear it from the inside.

She tried to smile but was very nervous about this. She made sure to remember all of her instructor training and driving lessons on top of her time driving her mother's station wagon.

This was very different however. The raw power behind this car was not the same and she had to go slow and steady.

Steve watched her backing out of the driveway waving and she was thankful she didn't hit anything. Turning onto the open road from the driveway and beginning the long cruise down the heavily wooded back roads to get to Old Cherry Road, she cursed herself for getting mixed up in this.

The drive felt surreal. Like a dream. But she couldn't deny that it was nice to be in the driver's seat of this amazing car. The ride was smooth, the engine pristine, and the feel of the leather seat underneath her very comfortable. Mandy was sad Billy could never know of this and that she would never be able to share it with him. She could imagine the look on his face if he knew. He would kill her. He would kill them all.

Checking the rear view mirror, Billy had gone quiet and was softly snoring passed out in the back seat, his long legs scrunched up as he mumbled lightly in his drunken state.

He still looked kinda cute like this but if he woke up his temper would be a frightening visage to behold if it sunk in that she was driving and touching HIS car. Even if to do a favor for him, he would still be livid.

Why was she doing this? Nothing was making her and it was so ridiculous that she cursed herself under her breath for it practically the whole drive home, paranoid of random deer or animals running out into the road or other cars showing up. Lucky for her the roads were dead with no other vehicles but this one traveling along it.

Mandy sighed and shook her head wondering what she did to deserve such a punishment as this and prayed everything under the sun that he didn't wake up in the middle of the drive or before reaching the familiar street near their houses. He would be SUPER pissed and there was no telling how he would react or what he would do. She was taking a very big risk right now. But she was doing it for him.

If she were lucky, he would not remember ANY of this in a few hours once he woke up in his car. She hoped against all hope he was so smashed that he had blacked out and none of this would ever come back to him.

Tree after tree, mile after mile, she got more confident as she drove and the road gave her virtually no trouble at all. The car handled the turns like a dream. She could see why he loved this car so much and why he chose it, if he in fact did. It seemed like his own personal taste.

Billy snoozed on and she kept a watchful eye all around the car in every direction making sure she was pacing herself and doing a good job. She had never been more careful driving in her entire life, because she felt her life indeed would have depended on it.

Finally pulling onto the familiar road about a half an hour later she took pride in herself that she made it in one piece with no problems. She pulled up to his side of the street on the curb and parked his car very carefully.

Turning off the engine she looked to see if he was still asleep and he was. Now she just had to sit here and wait for him to begin to stir

before locking him inside with his keys and going home to bed.

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Mandy had been parked there for almost seven to eight hours. It had been close to ten at night around the time he had to bring her back home that he was completely smashed and they loaded him into his car. The drive took a half hour so it was closer to eleven at night once they pulled up at his place.

He slept the entire time in the backseat with her still waiting for him to recover and wake up. That had been roughly about seven hours ago with dawn on it's way at close to five or six in the morning.

It was silent all around them on the quiet street as the darkness was being chased away by sunrise fast approaching right on time as predicted.

Her father was going to kill either him, her, or both of them for not coming home last night at a reasonable hour as was discussed. They would most likely wonder where she had been all night. If she told them she was in Billy's car parked right across the street alone with him and him being drunk they would flip the hell out.

Maybe she could spin a story that her friend Nikki had too much to drink so she drove her home with her car and kept an eye on her until she knew she was going to be okay.

Maybe she could convince them she had stayed at her place. If her father knew she was with Billy he would lose it and most likely march across the street to talk to Neil and Susan about it angrily. Knowing how Neil was with his son that wouldn't be an ideal scenario to play out.

When her mother and father had invited the Hargrove family over for dinner at their house she saw how strict he was with Billy and how emotionless his son sat at the dinner table taking it with no response other than to comply with every word. No snark and no attitude was given. Billy wasn't himself at all like he was at school and was more like a hardened soldier taking orders from his father as if he were his Commanding Officer. The animosity between them was thinly veiled

and it showed.

Max and Susan kept silent apparently knowing their place in that household and it had hurt Mandy to see it. Even her parents saw it but they tried to still remain polite and just get through the motions of a normal neighborly dinner keeping the peace despite their discomfort. Mandy guessed that would be the last time her folks would invite them over.

There was something going on there that Mandy had wanted to ask him when they went outside into the night air on her back patio. But she was too afraid to bring it up not wanting him to snap or to walk away angry which would only cause a scene.

She recalled his face that night as he smoked his cigarette in the far corner, the embers lighting up his features to show a hidden deep pain and distant eyes so far away from her and everything else.

Shaking her thoughts she realized they were the first thing on her mind when she stretched and gave a light yawn leaning back in the drivers seat. She must have fallen asleep after parking but only a light nap because Billy did not make a sound which would have woken her before now.

Rubbing her eyes sleepily she looked back to see if he was stirring yet but aside from a few groans in his sleep and a bit of shifting uncomfortably in the backseat he wasn't awake.

Admiring his sleeping form and how peaceful he looked she replayed the events that occurred at the party. Recalled how almost all night his eyes were more on her than anyone or anything else.

He had said a lot of things. Stupid drunken things that she really shouldn't put too much stock in. But they had made her feel something all the same. He thought she was sexy and said he had been thinking about bringing her home with him. The way he tried to touch her face and then gently grabbed her wrist to keep her there when she got up to find help. His eyes so needy and honest with how he looked at her.

All of it was strange and not like him at all, not from what she had

experienced from him before. Since when was he gentle and sweet to her? This entire time that she had known him he had been forceful, rude, up close and personal in her face often, and extremely perverted towards her. Just how much of what he had said at Steve's place and in the car while he was mumbling as she drove them home did he actually mean?

She heard him shift in the back and begin to sound like his hangover was in full swing finally hitting him hard. And no wonder, considering just how much he had drank last night mostly out of anger of her snubbing him in the pool. Sitting there she waited to see what he would say and do. The next thing he murmured she was not expecting.

"Stop the car..." he slurred again in the back of the Camaro as he tried to sit up.

"What?" Mandy replied looking back at him. He was trying so hard to get up and move but he kept sliding down the seat and getting frustrated. Apparently he was still slightly under the effects of his binge but conscious enough to know he needed something.

"Stop... the... car. I'm going to be sick." He repeated not realizing the car was parked. For him she imagined it felt like being on a rocky boat out in the ocean even though they were still on solid ground.

"It is stopped. It's parked, Billy. Open your door and lean your head out so you don't mess up your car." She said to him slightly annoyed but still feeling bad for him and wanting to care for him. She had no idea why as much of a dick as he had been to her all week. She felt responsible for him while he was reduced to the mental state of a child like her little brother Calvin when being fussy and stubborn.

She saw him fumbling for the door handle unable to locate it or get a grip on it as he groaned from imaginary motion sickness of a make believe moving car.

*Oh shit. If she didn't act fast...*

She stashed his keys in her book bag so as not to lose them and so both her hands could be free in case she had to steady him. She had

to move quickly and help him get out so he could do what he needed to do. He would not be happy if he vomited all over the inside of his car. And neither would she.

Opening her driver side door she ran over to the side he was sitting closest to and opened the door making him practically fall out of it sideways with a curse word. When he steadied himself as much as he could on his own she was a lot more able to help him up giving him support as they worked together to stand him rightside up.

Once he was standing he shambled over to some random bushes nearby and Mandy looked away partly on giving him privacy and partly on sparing her own stomach. She could hear the sounds. It wasn't pleasant. But at least it was done outside and in the grass instead of inside his lovely Camaro.

Looking after a few minutes she frowned when she noticed he had thrown up in Mrs Gilbert's rose garden. She was going to have a fit when she came out in a few hours to water and talk to them.

When he was finished she looked over and saw him wiping his mouth and instinctively putting a piece of chewing gum in between his teeth to try and mask the smell of it on his breath.

He took a cigarette from his pack that was nestled in his leather jacket pocket and his lighter in shaking hands trying to steady it. After a few tries he finally managed. No matter what was going on with him he could always find the will to smoke.

She rolled her eyes and stood there waiting. Striking the flint on the lighter he lit one up and sat on the curb with his head almost hanging between his powerful knees, his long legs drawn up and bent.

"Those roses were her pride and joy, you know. Mrs Gilbert is going to be very upset." Mandy said crossly unable to tone her anger down even on a sick hungover Billy.

"Well... not anymore. She can plant new ones." He said not even giving two flying shits.

"So what happened last night?" Billy rubbed his forehead then his

face and pinched his nose most likely trying to handle the onslaught of his hangover migraine.

"You drank yourself to death. Welcome to hell." Why could she not maintain herself around him and stop being cruel? She was almost becoming as bad as he was.

"That's no surprise. I've been in hell for a long time. Even before coming here. I'm a well known resident." Some of his humor was still there despite how horrible he must be feeling right now.

Mandy recalled the pain in his eyes whenever around his father and felt a stab of guilt. She eased off on him.

"You were extremely hammered last night. You clearly went over your limit. Were you trying to kill yourself? You know you can get alcohol poisoning and actually die, right?" Now her concern was showing for him and it made him chuckle at her.

She couldn't believe he was laughing over something so serious as if it were a joke. Teens died from overdrinking all around the world every day all year long.

"What are you, my mother?" He said taking a long drag on his cigarette and sitting down on the edge of the back seat with the door still open to rest.

She could imagine the world was still slightly spinning for him. He thought of his mother for a moment as his gaze went somewhere far away. A distant memory of his mother taking care of him when he was sick with the flu and had a fever. He recalled her worried face trying to put a smile on for him as she took care of him all night. Much like Mandy's face was looking at him now.

She moved closer to him at least a foot or so but still tried to keep her distance. He could feel her fear of him radiating from her and read the hesitation on her face. She wanted to be close and care but she held herself back from him as always. Did he really make her constantly feel like this? And if so... why? Why did it have to be this way? This eternal dance back and forth of want and need mixed with fear and repulsion.



"Close enough, I suppose. But if I was your mother, I'm sure you would have turned out differently than this." Now she was getting personal with him. He could see she was getting fired up and that familiarity between them felt better than her feeling sorry for him. He grinned.

"Well, sweetheart I guess you'll just..." He was about to finish and then it all hit him and the realization sunk in.

"Wait... did you fucking drive my car?!" He suddenly shot up and his face was a mix of incredulity and a slow rising anger. He didn't remember much about last night other than being in the pool with her and Tina being annoyingly clingy. But obviously if they were both here and he blacked out drunk, she had been the one to drive. Damnit. And to think he missed seeing that for himself.

She looked down almost feeling guilty but had no reason for why. She did something nice for him and he was making her feel bad for it.

*Fuck. Should have seen this coming.*

He put his hands out demanding his keys from her not trusting himself to speak anything further in case he might say something really stupid. As if he hadn't already. The keys were somewhere in her book bag and she was digging into it angrily trying to find them.

"No, Billy, you drove it in your sleep, bravo, you deserve an award." She spat. He glared at her sarcasm then got an angry antagonistic grin on his face as if he wanted to go off on her. But he stayed silent.

"Yes, I had to drive your car! Who else was going to? No one at the party could. Either they were gone, still drunk, or couldn't leave and had their own cars to take home. I figured you wouldn't want to leave yours there. And I begged Steve to let you crash at his place but he said no because of his parents coming home and he didn't know when you would wake up and be sober enough to leave."

Her face was getting red over him being so mad over her doing him an actual solid. He should be thankful.

The realization that she had fought to find a way to get him and his car home safely was there but he was still plenty steamed about someone else being behind the wheel of his Camaro. What if she had wrecked it or hit something? Jesus, that was a bill he could not afford to have it fixed and his old man would wring his neck out for it. Not to mention she wasn't on the insurance so it would not be covered.

"Whatever. At least you didn't fucking wreck it. But don't ever do that again. No one drives my car but me, understand?" He snapped and finished his cigarette grounding it out on the pavement with his boot with anger flashing in his cold eyes.

She stopped her search and eyed him through narrow slits. Mandy was pissed. Not even one thank you to her for doing this? Typical Hargrove. Classic jerk move.

"Oh, thank you so much, Mandy for driving me home safely and caring for me and my car. That was very nice of you." She said herself while pretending it was him talking to her in gratitude sarcastically.

"You're welcome, Hargrove. Have a nice damn day." She answered herself forgetting all about the keys in her wrath and turned on her heels to head toward her house when he suddenly grabbed her wrist gently like he did before and stood up pulling her to him.

"Thank you, princess. Allow me to show you my thanks..." He pulled her into him and towered over her so his lips were nearly touching hers.

Two reasons for this. One, he wanted to feel her and touch her. Two, he still needed his keys. She was so silly and forgetful when angry and it really made him want to laugh.

She had a shocked look on her face when he grabbed her and held her tight putting his warm strong arms around her soft frame almost lovingly.

His breath was minty with the gum but still laced with cigarette flavor and not like how she feared it would smell after him being sick. She froze and couldn't move her eyes locked onto his as he ran his hands from between her shoulder blades where he had held her

and down the small of her back.

As his hands moved lower he actually had the nerve to grope her behind pressing herself into him. He pressed his forehead to hers for a moment and then turned his face to the side dipping his warm mouth to her neck nibbling it softly while pulling her hair to the side out of his way. All his anger now replaced with need and want and desire to feel her and kiss her. He traced his kisses from her neck to her shoulder using both his tongue and his lips and she shivered.

"Billy." She breathed out softly but he didn't listen and kept moving his hot mouth over her exposed skin bared from her off the shoulder top.

"Yes, rabbit?" He playfully used that stupid nickname again knowing it infuriated her.

"Stop..." she warned again and he moved his lips to her ear not giving up.

She almost went limp in his arms when she heard his breathing hot and heavy in her ear and he gave a slight moan while feeling up her round soft behind over her skirt. His hands on her there made her swallow hard. His hard warm chest pressed to hers exchanging his firm surface for her soft one as their bodies melded together.

"I have to go home now." She panted out giving him her excuse for demanding he let her go.

He stopped teasing her ear and neck turning his head to look into his father's driveway seeing the Ford truck sitting there. He knew any minute now Neil would be waking up to have breakfast prepared by Susan and would be stomping around the house angry if his son wasn't in his room where he belonged, according to him.

Frowning in frustration he noted he would have to slip quietly into his room by the window again pretending he had been home at a reasonable hour to cheuffer Max around today. No doubt Neil would know he had not been home since last night so what was the point in trying to fake it?

He too had to go but he didn't want to. He was still upset that Mandy had shot him down in his game with her in the pool and wanted to prove that she still wanted him. Moving his hands to pull up her skirt enough that he could work his knee between her legs and press into her core with his own body he growled longingly in her ear to say something to her he knew would set her off.

"If my old man wasn't home, you would be coming home with me. Right now. In my bed." She gasped softly as his teeth found her earlobe and she involuntarily closed her eyes at the feel of him gently biting it.

He was feeling her up with his hands while recalling that amazing black bikini she had on last night that showed all her delicious curves to him. It was setting his blood on fire just imagining him peeling it off of her with his mouth and hands. He moaned softly at the thought right into her ear making her tremble as he nuzzled into the side of her smooth fair face. He wasn't really mad at her over driving his car so much anymore.

When she had enough of his teasing and his back and forth treatment of her, she finally found the strength to push him away and off of her. Releasing his grip he laughed and let her go. The way she responded to him told him everything he still needed to know.

"See you in school, Monday, cupcake." He winked at her his usual arrogant self fully restored.

Last night hadn't shamed it out of him or phased him at all. She doubted he remembered much of it just as she suspected. The soft gentle honest boy was gone replaced by the flirtatious cruel imposter. His real self hidden from her once more.

She put her hands stiffly to her side making small tight fists out of them and stood with her chin slightly up eyeing him for a moment. Humor danced in his eyes over her defiance. He loved her fiery spirit and when she was like this. It made him feel he had the real control and she was simply trying to deny that.

"Not if I can help it, Hargrove. I did you a favor now don't expect me to do it again. Because it won't happen. Just leave me alone and stay

away. Understand?"

Digging for his keys in her book bag she had hanging over her shoulder, Mandy tossed them towards him rather fast and he caught them with equally amazing quick reflexes. Turning to leave he whistled at her and she ignored him with her body stiff as she briskly walked to her front door. Unlocking it she hoped her parents hadn't seen nor heard their exchange out there in the street and that they were both fast asleep tired from work and watching Calvin.

Before she shut her door she saw him leaning against his Camaro his arms folded and grinning at her. He was not going to listen or keep away as she had told him to, that much was certain.

Once inside her room she dialed for Nikki and when she answered she told her they made it safe and she was going to lay down and get some sleep. Nikki asked her if she would like to go to the Starcourt Mall with her, Tucker, and Alex today and she agreed telling her that if any of their parents asked, she had stayed the late night early morning with her before sunrise and coming home. Nikki said she had it covered before they hung up and was nice enough not to ask anything about Billy.

Right now Mandy just wanted to pass out and forget about the party and all about Billy too.

Collapsing on her bed she fell fast asleep trying hard not to think of how his eyes looked when he had gazed into hers on the couch while drunk. Or the sound of his soft giggle he let slip loose to her and his relaxed position when sitting by her with his gorgeous neck and face leaned back. Rolling over she pressed her face into her pillow and groaned out with frustration.

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## **14. Tinas Halloween Bash-Tricked&Treated**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

### **TINA'S HALLOWEEN PARTY - TRICKED AND TREATED**

#### **Summary:**

Mandy gets dragged by her friend Nikki to Tina's Halloween Bash instead of their plans to go trick or treating together as a group. Tucker and Alex don't show. Carol, Tina, and Tommy are there as well as Steve and Nancy. Mandy is reluctant to drink and has a run in with Billy who hunts her down as the newly crowned Keg King. He puts the moves on her on the dance floor. But Tommy has other plans for her which ruins her night however bringing Billy & Mandy closer together when something dangerous happens to her at the party...

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Mandy walked to school again, bundled up in layers of shirts underneath her baggy sweatshirt and instead of wearing skirts she wore long thick jeans, gloves, her warm fuzzy boots, and made sure not a single spot of skin was exposed to the freezing temperatures

besides her face and neck.

She was grateful for the excuse to ditch her summer clothes that showed more skin and her curves in exchange for thicker less revealing clothing. The bonus perk to it was that Billy Hargrove and all the other horny teenage boys would have less to see of her.

She didn't like the way Billy had been staring at her the night of Steve Harrington's pool party a while back. The black bikini that Nikki had leant her was going too far for her usual comfort with attire and Billy made her feel every inch of that awkwardness when he had swam in the pool so close to her to try and make moves on her.

She shut him down clearly making him upset but he had still practically watched her all night in between having girls come up to him flirting or drinking with the boys. He was not going to give up on hounding her until he got her alone, that much was painfully clear. She swallowed hard and a blush spread across her face burning hot despite the cold and she could have kicked herself for thinking about it.

Shuddering and folding her arms over her shoulders rubbing her body for warmth she felt the October chill attempt to penetrate her hoodie despite how many layers she had on. It made her wonder how she would survive Halloween night going out with Nikki, Alex, and Tucker for one last year of childish trick or treating and the overindulgence of candy bars and suckers.

Even she felt she was too old for it but she didn't know when she would get to hang with her friends in person once they had all gotten into some college or other. It would be sad to have to say goodbye at the end of the year and to keep in touch long distance by phone as much as possible. Mandy wanted to spend as much time with them as she could for a change, regretting all the months and years she hadn't thought of it when hiding herself away from both them and the world around her.

Hawkins was extremely cold this time of year as the months and temperature slowly changed from post summer break to crawling towards the Autumn and Winter seasons . The brown, orange, red,

and yellow leaves were falling and blowing everywhere along streets, sidewalks, and in parking lots. People already had their pumpkins out carved in gruesome and silly designs and cheesy skeletons and horror movie monster statues were everywhere. Most houses were littered with cobwebs, spiders, tombstones, and creepy decorations galore. Halloween was just around the corner and no doubt there would be parties cropping up left and right.

Some were college parties known to be wild while others were smaller ones thrown by high school students while their parents were working late or out taking their smaller siblings trick or treating all night. They were spoken about in hushed and excited whispers in the hallways of Hawkins High as all the students discussed what they would wear.

Mandy still had no idea what she would be dressing up as but it was a cross between a sexy witch or a slutty vampiress. The ideas came from Nikki who had practically begged her to go out costume shopping with her last weekend to find something. Most of the stores shelves were getting empty by now.

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Standing by her locker after the bell had rung letting out last period she half wondered to herself if Billy would be dressing up as anything. She mused on what kind of costume, if any, he would even be remotely interested in and if he would show up to Tina's party that weekend. If he did, she would definitely steer clear of any party being thrown on Halloween.

Mandy was still furious at how up close and personal he was getting, invading her personal space almost on an every other day basis, and how arrogantly he was looking her up and down whenever he cornered her somewhere or ran into her. His flirtatious comments that set her on fire and made her run from him as he laughed. He was very nonchallant about it and it made her very angry at how little he thought of her personal bubble and feelings when it came to him messing with her.

The party that was inevitable held legendary status in Hawkins. Each year the gathering getting more and more wild and interesting. Tina's



parties were known for hookups, breakups, self discovery, loss of popularity for some, and climbing the social ladder for others. They were talked about for even months after they had come and gone.

Tina was one of the more popular girls of the entire school second only to Carol, who was Tommy's girlfriend, and she would be throwing her own Halloween Bash at her parents house this weekend. Her family didn't do Halloween, she didn't have any younger siblings, and they entrusted her to a babysitter instead of run of the house being all alone even though she had scoffed at them and complained about it in class feeling she was too old at 17 years old to have one.

The sitter was more of a guard dog or chaperone to make sure she didn't do anything they wouldn't approve of while they were gone on their separate business trips. But little did they know that the babysitter was just as keen on having a rager while they were gone as Tina was and she had paid the sitter not to say anything and that she could stay for the party. The watchdog agreed as long as there was plenty of food and alcohol at the party she could partake in.

Soon word got around and flyers were passed out at lunch and break. Flyers made their way being shoved into backpacks and folded up into pockets while passed around in classrooms discreetly under desks so the teachers didn't see. Nikki had gotten her hand on one of the flyers but Mandy hadn't paid any attention or even attempted to grab one for herself.

She wasn't the type for such gatherings, she had told Nikki this time and time again but despite how she had shot down her hopes in flames every time, she still insisted each year around the major holidays. Mandy would much prefer to keep to herself and opted for spending a quiet night at home alone to read a good book or watch scary movies sitting by herself on the couch. She would even be the type to simply pass out candy to the little critters that came knocking on her door at all hours of the night. Just her, the remote, her costume, and some popcorn.

Thanksgivings and Christmas's flew by over the years with it just being her and her tight knit family with the occasional visits from her friends coming over to exchange gifts or drop off a dish as a gift. She avoided Valentines Day like the plague not caring much for it's

sentiment and she wouldn't be caught dead ever going to a school dance.

She still had no idea how she would break it to Nikki and her boys that she wasn't going to Senior Prom. Nikki would be heartbroken and Tucker's feelings for her crushed and put on the backburner. She dreaded him asking her to go with him and the weird aftershocks of her declining between the two of them now that their friendship was rocky.

When she was at her locker, her friend Nikki had come flying around the corner of the hallway and skidded to a stop behind her breathless and exciteable.

Mandy spun around at the familiar tap on her shoulder and seeing the Halloween themed piece of paper in her hand while she was grinning and popping her gum loudly, all she did was sigh and roll her eyes.

"The answer is no." Was all she said as she huffed adamantly and put her books away. She was still steamed up and angry about her on and off encounters with Hargrove and had closed her locker rather loudly, slamming it unintentionally.

He had been pestering her, getting under her skin, riling her up. He acted interested and then seconds later she would see him holding onto one girl here and there and then later kissing another girl out by the bleachers or by his car, even driving off with them every now and then to take them out somewhere. Sometimes he looked right at her while making his move on them and grinning as if he knew it ruffled her feathers the wrong way. What Mandy still couldn't figure out was: WHY? She didn't hate anyone, but if she did, he would be at the top of her list.

He was so annoying and she quickly lost her fascination in him being the new kid on the block with all his smooth talk and his flashy smile or perfect hair and skin. Despite him being somewhat attractive with a nice car just as gorgeous to match him, she blocked it all out and detached unlike most girls who swooned over him. She actively avoided him as much as possible and would hole herself up at the school's library and help out Mrs Bannister with sorting books and

dusting off shelves. She knew it would be the one place he would NOT show up to torment her. He didn't seem the type to read let alone so much as to pickup and touch a book, judging by his clowning around in classes he had with her and not caring about assignments and his school work.

He was so pompous and a slacker. It made her skin crawl whenever he flashed his blue eyes all over her as if undressing her with them. In defiance of his roaming eyes and the way he licked his lips or bit his lower one at her to mess with her she had worn her most baggiest and nerdiest clothes she could find in her closet and even resorted to putting her long dark hair into a tight ponytail and wearing her glasses.

Now that she knew he would be all over Tina's party invitation, as she caught him flirting with her too, she would be damned if she would go to a party where she could have a high risk of bumping into him. He would just hit on her and make her very uncomfortable and be a complete jerkwad if she ran away and turned him down.

Nikki's voice brought her back to the present moment from being lost in her thoughts yet again.

"Yes. You ARE GOING. Please, don't make me go alone! You're my best friend and I have no one else to take with me! I need a wingman to dance with while I scope out all the cute boys. I'll even hook you up with one if you help me out."

Her friend pleaded with her trying to tempt her into it as she was putting on a show of a fake pout with sad drooping eyes. Nikki was good at trying and succeeding to make Mandy feel guilty and pressured to go to these parties, despite her never giving in and going along with her in all the years that she had known her. Her friend waved the flyer around as her pout turned into a grin. Faker, Amanda thought, laughing out loud at her indomitable spirit.

"Then take Tucker and Alex with you or hang out with Tina and Carol. Besides, I thought the plan was no parties this year and instead we were going out to actually Trick or' Treat for old time's sake like we used to as kids together. What happened to that idea? I mean, we bought costumes and everything." She turned to face Nikki and

hugged her book bag to her chest.

"Oh, fuck Trick or Treating, this will be much more fun! C'mon, Mandy, escape your boring life for once and join the land of the living! It's your senior year! Don't you wanna look back and say you actually did something wild, crazy, and fun for once before you go off to college? You're too young to die now. Live a little! I bet your parents would practically PUSH you out the door to go to this party. Even they know you barely ever get out or do fun stuff."

Nikki laughed smacking her gum and blowing a large pink bubble in her face. Mandy reached and popped it with her finger making her friend frown and mutter her displeasure at the contact she made with her gum.

"Gross, Mandy. So... please?" She insisted and begged again her eyes lighting up hoping for a yes.

Mandy looked over hearing kids getting excited about the party flyers and couldn't help but notice Tina was not too far away from them still busy passing them out. She noticed out of the corner of her eye that Billy had approached and took one from Tina while flirting with her making her blush. Mandy groaned.

"Keep me occupied all night. Stay by my side do NOT go off and leave me alone. And please for the love of all that is holy, keep HIM away from me." Mandy nodded in Billy's direction and Nikki followed to look and see the person she was referring to.

"Mmmmm... Billy Hargrove will be there? Sweet Jesus, that's even more of an incentive to go." Nikki bit her lower lip checking out his ass in his tight denim jeans and his open button down shirt that showed off his chest. She stared even pausing the chewing of her gum.

Mandy groaned at her friend.

"God, not you too. Is there any girl in this school who absolutely detests him as much as I do?" She sighed and before Billy could notice her she began walking out of the hall and to the front doors of Hawkins High to leave, Nikki in tow behind her laughing and trying

to plead her case for her attraction to him.

Billy looked over and saw the girl from his first period class with her friend both walking away. He noticed that a flyer was in her hand and he grinned. Tonight could be the night he could close in on her and see just how much he could make her blush, which he absolutely loved to do. Just how far would an uptight girl like her go? It made his blood boil with excitement thinking about it.

Bending over Tina's hand to kiss it and make her flush with desire he almost hoped it was Mandy instead of her he was doing it to. But he had to play nice with this girl since it was her house and her party. He said farewell and walked out to his car fast so as not to be late picking up Max and taking her home. Neil would have his ass if he didn't and would most likely not let him go out this weekend so he had to get on his good side. He needed to let loose this weekend and have a good time drinking with the guys. Maybe even get a little hot action in the process to blow off some steam.

Nikki and Mandy walked as far as they could together, enjoying the Fall colors all around them and making small talk, before they had to split ways to head home. Nikki shouted that she would come over around three in the evening to help Mandy do her hair, makeup, and help her with her costume. Mandy stubbornly tried to shake her of this plan but she was pretty much set on it so she agreed halfheartedly and said goodbye to her.

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Walking up the driveway to the front porch to unlock the door she breathed a sigh of relief and was glad to not see the familiar blue Camaro resting on the curb across the street. Bad enough he went to her school, even more depressing that he lived right across the street from her too.

Hurrying up out of the cold afternoon air she walked in to find her little brother Calvin playing on the living room carpet and making a mess with all of his toys. She tried to step around his toy cars but accidentally stepped on one in the process and grumbled at the moment of pain it caused even with her boots on.

Both her parents were home today and her mom was cooking something amazing. She sniffed the air in appreciation and set her book bag down on the couch then made her way to where they were. Her parents were talking about something important as she approached, most likely about babysitters or who was going to watch Calvin this weekend. They were kind enough to agree to let her go to the pool party so she would feel selfish asking them to let her go to the Halloween bash too.

Taking a seat at the kitchen table she smiled at them both and placed her chin on her hands.

"Well, Becky summers can't do it this weekend. Something about a big Halloween party or something in town. I also called Joyce Byers but she has been spending all the time she can with her two sons ever since that tragic accident that happened last year. So that plan is pretty much shot, Rick." Her mom stirred something in a pot with a long wooden spoon. Spaghetti seemed to be on the menu tonight. Rick sighed as he prepped the hamburger meat.

"We will just have to figure something out, dear." He looked to Mandy once remembering he had a daughter, he was so caught up in the struggle of finding someone to watch her little brother.

"Hey, sweetheart. Spaghetti tonight. Also, we wanted to ask your plans for this weekend." He grinned and seasoned the meat then got up to bring it to her mother and put it in the pot as Katherine stirred the sauce and gave a frustrated sigh.

"Sounds yummy. Did you guys mean this Saturday or this Sunday? Because I was hoping to umm... go out this Saturday with Nikki, Tucker, and Alex. Tina from school is having a Halloween party and I just thought maybe I could go."

Both her parents stopped what they were doing to stare at her. Her father leaned in to whisper to her mother.

"Alright who is this girl and what has she done with our sweet Mandy Hawkins?" Her mother waved him off and was all smiles, obviously happy that her daughter was planning on doing something other than sitting around the house all weekend for a change. She beamed

proudly at her. Her dad chuckled and went to dip his finger in the sauce hoping her mom wouldn't catch him and she swatted his hand with the spoon lightly. His pride slightly wounded he gave up and sat back down at the table.

"I don't see any reason why not, baby. I mean you went to that other party and did just fine. So, yes, if you wouldn't mind taking a Sunday shift to watch Calvin I could just call in my emergency plan. I could get Rebecca a few blocks down to do it." Her mother smiled and finished up with the sauce and stirred the noodles making sure they were soft and ready.

"Calvin, dinner time, young man." She called to him and they all took their seats for their family meal time. Calvin was picky about most things her parents made them but spaghetti was his favorite so he sat down right away and began to clank his fork on his plate impatiently giving a sly grin. Her father stopped him but he went right back to it so he gave up and began to butter the rolls as her mom brought a huge bowl of the spaghetti to the table. Serving up everyone's plates she finally took her own seat to enjoy the fruits of her labor.

"I agree. It's good to see you hanging out more with your friends." Her father said in between wrapping the spaghetti on his fork and thanking his wife while digging in.

Hanging out with her friends. She nodded as she began to eat while thinking she would put her father in an early grave if he knew just how many boys and people under the influence would be there. One more undeniably intimidating than all the rest.

"Thanks. I guess I'm just feeling bad for ditching my friends all the time." She sighed and took a bite. Looking over to Calvin he already had a messy spaghetti face and it was all over his hands and down the biblike drape her mother had put on him. He was bouncing excitedly as he ate content to have one of his favorite staples tonight. Her mom chimed in while passing the salad she had prepped to them so they could have a more healthy balance to go with the more filling side of dinner.

"Honey, we are proud of you. Just stay out of trouble, okay? And make sure you are not going home with anyone besides Nikki. Her

father tensed up as if that was a more safe alternative to Billy's insane driving. If he only knew.

"I will. I promise." She swore as she worked on her plate and made a face at Calvin which he cheerfully returned, his mouth open to show his food. Their mom scolded him and reminded him of his manners. They enjoyed talking during dinner and when it was done she helped to wash and dry the plates and utensils. She was relieved her parents were taking this better than she was. She was still nervous but she knew she would have fun as long as she could avoid the Hargrove kid. Shaking thoughts of him away she kissed her parents goodnight and went upstairs to shower and turn in for bed.

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The next day was the big day of the party. Her parents went all out and spared no expense on the decorations both on the inside as well as the outside of the house. Getting Calvin ready in his cowboy costume they also dressed up. Her mom was a cheerleader, which made her dad flirt with her openly in fun practically making her eyeroll and fake gag and he just laughed at her reaction of their PDA.

Her dad was dressed up as Elvis Presley and he even had the hip motion, lip snarl, and southern drawl to match. He had done it in front of Nikki when she came over to help Mandy get ready and it practically made her die of embarrassment. Nikki, however, found it hilarious and complimented him saying he could be a paid actor on the Vegas Strip. This made her father beam with pride.

Blowing kisses and saying goodbye her parents left as the sun got low in the sky to take her little brother out on the town, finally leaving Mandy and Nikki alone to do their own thing. They were up in her bedroom and both sitting at her vanity helping each other with makeup tips. Her friend decided to take the sexy witch costume leaving Mandy with the rather large vampire fangs to deal with.

In the end she decided not to wear them as they made her mouth uncomfortable but she did style her long black hair complete with the infamous V on the forehead that vampires like Dracula usually had. She slipped on the black silky dress and was mortified at how it made her cleavage pop slightly and instantly regretted picking it up.



Slipping on tights and her black leather knee high boots that zipped up from her ankle to the very top she looked herself over in the mirror. She liked the way the eyeshadow and eyeliner brought out her green eyes and the red lipstick was juicy and shiny really bringing out her plump full lips.

"I don't know, Nikki, this seems like a bit too much." She mused as she looked at her lovely curved hips, hourglass yet curvy figure, and her long soft straightened black hair and how it fell down to her butt.

"Oh, shut up girl, you look amazing. Here, I have these other vampire fangs that aren't big and dorky like the plastic ones you got in the costume bag. Try them on. They simply press onto your canines and there is a special putty you can press into them to make them stay." She handed them to her and waited for Mandy to open the case and set it up. Once they were in she turned and gave Nikki a small hiss and a grin which made her laugh.

"Very nice. NOW you look like a hot sexy vampiress vixen." Nikki chortled and grabbed her black witch hat with the shiny buckle on it and her fake broom. They both decided she could leave her normal clothes and makeup bag in Mandy's room and just pick it up after the party or get it from her the next day.

"So? How do I look?" Nikki twirled excitedly with her black witch dress twirling around her at the ends which were tattered in design. Her knee high striped black and white nylons and her black witch shoes with an equally matching buckle on her hat and belt looked amazing and Mandy almost felt jealous that she filled in the top much better than she could.

"You look... absolutely raaaavishing, daaaaaalink." Mandy said in her best vampire accent she could muster from old horror movies she had seen and then added on in a regular serious voice of appraisal.

"You made a wise choice in not going for the green facepaint. This looks more like a sexy witch than the Wicked Witch from Wizard of Oz like you had originally thought of. Your makeup is much better."

Nikki agreed and sighed happily and they both giggled. Grabbing Mandy's hand that had fake black long press on nails she announced

it was time to get going... but not too soon. She had a knack for being fashionably late because she loved all eyes on her when she arrived at an already full party.

"You look amazing yourself, Mandy, really you do. Your hair is perfect and that dress, oh my god, if some guys eyes don't pop out of their heads when they see you, I will be absolutely livid with them for being that stupid." Mandy blushed and was definitely second guessing the v neck vampire dress that she felt exposed far too much of her chest but smiled anyway.

Nikki waited for Mandy to lock up while unlocking her car. She ran to catch up to her, holding her chest not liking how her breasts bounced almost with every step. She felt completely out of her element and positively sinful, which wasn't like her at all. It was almost... exciting too.

Halloween definitely was the one night of the year you could be something other than yourself. The fangs felt amazing and weird and cool on her canines all at the same time and matched the color of her teeth so well it blended in. When she smiled it almost made her feel dangerous and sexy. Her makeup was amazing and she was happy she let Nikki do it for her because she knew she wouldn't be able to make it look half as good. It complimented her naturally pale skin and her dark hair.

"Guys like Billy Hargrove, you mean." She said in a half frustrated half playfully accusatory tone of voice getting into Nikki's car.

Nikki pretended not to hear her and feigned ignorance as if she was thinking nothing of the sort but Mandy knew deep down she would try and set them up if she could. A thing she could not let happen no matter how hard her friend tried. It was out of the question. Billy may be an ass but he was also way out of her league and not her type as much as she wasn't his.

A few moments later of driving down the dark roads with lit up houses and yards and sidewalks overrun with trick or treaters and families, Nikki asked her the burning question.

"Why don't you like him , Mandy? He's absolutely beautiful. He has a

bitchin' car. And he's the most popular guy right now in school. Poor Steve is still reeling from being replaced by him in status. It's heartbreaking but kinda comical in a way."

She looked at Mandy and saw she was quietly contemplating this. Keeping her eyes on the road and looking back over her steering wheel she waited patiently for her response not wanting to pry too much.

"I don't know. I just... don't. There's something about him that strikes me as... wrong. Or maybe, it's because he seems too perfect that I am waiting to discover his fatal flaw."

She adjusted herself in the seat and folded her hands in her lap but was fidgeting. Nikki pressed on despite her body language.

"Fatal flaw? English, Mandy. You know I can't keep up with your brilliant and charming word play."

They laughed at this and Mandy nodded cutting off her laughter to get serious. She resorted to looking out the window to watch the hordes of people in a myriad of different costumes go by as they made their way to Tina's house.

Nikki was driving carefully so as not to run over someone's poor kid in the process. It wasn't really her car, it was her dad's, and if she dinged it up or committed accidental vehicular manslaughter, her father would kill her with his bare hands. He was a very timid and strict man, although still good to Nikki. Just... wary of everything and demanding on her friend at times.

The street lights lit up the road well enough but there were still dark patches here and there. Kids rushed about with their Halloween candy bags and pillow cases eagerly and Mandy felt a pinch in her heart longing for the days of being so young, carefree, and happy. Growing up had its fair share of growing pains and a hint of sadness to it.

Looking back she realized just how little she had done with her life up until this point and though she would never admit it, it slightly bothered her. This would only be her second party in eight years of

her lifetime, not counting childish little birthday parties she used to go to like Nikki and the gang's.

"His weakness. His bad side. It's there somewhere, but he keeps it hidden away and sugar coats it somehow. He's almost TOO perfect. Something about him sets me on edge and I wish I knew why so I could bury it and move on. I hate even thinking about him."

Nikki gave her a sympathetic but knowing smile and let them drive on in silence turning up Joan Jett's "I hate myself for loving you" on the radio. The perfect song in her mind to be playing at this very moment. Oh the sweet irony.

"Well, maybe you think about him all the time... because deep down you like him. Just a little bit." It was the last thing she would dare say about it when she noticed Mandy's sarcastic glare at her.

"I highly doubt that, Nikki. Never gonna happen."

"Just sayin'..." her friend grinned and then announced when they had pulled up to the address on the flyer. Not like they needed it. Nikki knew where Tina lived because she went to almost every single party she has ever thrown ever since Freshman year.

The house was nice considering it was in Loch Nora, which everyone knew was the rich neighborhood of Hawkins. Mandy used to trick or treat here as a kid with Nikki, Tucker, and Alex always coming home with a sack full of huge candy bars. The neighbors of this area had always been overly generous with the portions and handed out the best candy every year.

"Heeeeeeeey, party people! We are here! Wooooo!" Nikki had cried out enthusiastically as she parked in a small space she was lucky to have found on the curb. The place was packed. People dancing, making out, drinking, and smoking were everywhere in front of the house and Mandy saw that the place had toilet paper strewn about the trees and bushes.

The party was in full swing and she felt a pang of nervousness flush her insides seeing how wild the people were getting. The loud music from inside was booming playing the top hits of the year back to

back and she almost got her shoes puked on by a teen that obviously had way too much to drink. Mandy glanced nervously at her friend and was beginning to have doubts.

"Nikki, I don't think this is such a good id-." She had begun to yell over the loud music but Nikki grabbed her hand and tugged her along.

"No backing out now, missy! Let's do this thing!" Mandy tried to keep up with her as she dragged her towards the front doorstep.

The big double doors of the house had the familiar stained glass flower design on it she remembered from when Tina used to have sleepovers with her, Nikki, Nancy, Carol, and a few others. That had been before high school divided them into who was on the in crowd and who was not. Popularity had changed the nature of their preteen friendships.

Nikki remained on the in crowd and although Mandy wasn't, that never stopped Tina or Nikki from being decent and friendly with her. She knew less of Tina than she used to but Nikki remained close with her and often stood up for Mandy if other popular girls tried to talk bad about her.

Tina would remain neutral and although she never spoke up for her she didn't condone being mean to her like Carol did. When Carol hooked up with Tommy she had taken a turn for the worse and became a major jerk but Tina always viewed her home and place of her parties as neutral ground. She never allowed anyone to mistreat anyone there no matter what their status, so Mandy was thankful for that.

She had no doubt in her mind however that if Nikki hadn't remained so close to her after all these years, she wouldn't even be allowed to set foot here because of how the other girls talked about her behind her back and were cruel. But with her best girl friend by her side, she assured her none of that would be going down.

Ever since Tommy and Carol broke up, the girl often glared daggers at Mandy and it was clear she never really liked her nor would she tolerate her. As Mandy got older and got more attractive, Tommy had

often been trying to corner her and chase after her, which pissed Carol off even more. Normally, Mandy would simply run from him and evade but he still had an itch for her. If she ran into them tonight, and she was sure she would, she had no idea how that would go down but she was terrified.

Turning to face Mandy, Nikki looked at her to make sure she was alright even though she really wasn't.

"Girl, are you ready? This is going to be the BEST night of your life, I promise!" She bounced up and down and Mandy gave a soft but uncertain nervous smile and nodded shyly.

She trusted Nikki to keep her out of trouble and to keep her promise not to disappear on her or leave her alone. Mandy had nervously been scanning the front of the house hoping not to see the familiar blue Camaro and when she didn't find any trace of it some of her confidence finally began to mount. That's at least one problem she was thankful for not running into tonight.

The door opened up suddenly and they were both greeted by Tina in a white Madonna outfit as well as her lesser spoken about sister, Samantha. Sam was decked out in a gothy outfit heavy with black lipstick and eyeshadow. They hugged Nikki and waved both her and Mandy inside and showed them where the keg was in addition to the drinks in the kitchen then left them to it.

Tina looked amazing and her sister Samantha was her exact opposite looking like a goth queen. From what Mandy remembered, Sam had an amazing personality which often outshined Tina's looks but she was humble and kind to the outcast crowd. Sam complimented Mandy's vampiress outfit and made small talk with her in the kitchen as she showed them where the bathroom was and that the bedrooms were off limits. Halloween caution tape had been put on the bedroom doors and furniture placed in the way in attempts to keep people from going in them.

Mandy approached the kitchen and didn't know what to do with herself. Instead of reaching for a red plastic cup and partaking in the alcoholic beverages and concoctions, she instead looted the candy bowl for a big red cherry flavored lollipop. Nikki rolled her eyes and

served up a cup of the frothing unknown liquid party punch from the bowl. She practically pushed it into Mandy's direction then served herself some encouraging Mandy to just have a little sip at least and try it. Raising it to her lips, Mandy swallowed a small sip and made a face as if she had just ingested pure gasoline.

"Oh my god... what is in that stuff?" She said somewhat coughing and choking it out. Nikki laughed and then pulled her outside so they could drink for a bit and she knew it was only because Nikki was on the prowl for cute boys to talk to. She had made it clear she was going to find someone for Mandy to talk to by the end of the night. Mandy stood awkwardly outside with a cup in her hand not really knowing if she should just chug it and get it over with or dump it out when Nikki wasn't looking.

"Don't you dare..." Nikki said as if she had eyes in the back of her head when Mandy tried to get rid of the strong drink.

"Nikki, this stuff tastes like it came out of a gas pump. I swear I feel like I'm drinking nail polish right now. I don't know if I can stomach it." Nikki pushed the cup up to Mandy's lips and tipped it having her drink a little more, which she tried to keep up with and do with a little bit dribbling down her chin.

"Peer pressure, peer pressure." Nikki said playfully and chugged her own drink.

Mandy sputtered and wiped her mouth but after the first cup she felt herself becoming more relaxed. It eventually hit her and she got used to the taste.

"I'll be right back. I'm going to get us one or two more. Liquid courage if we're gonna find you a man tonight."

"Man? Are we even at the right party? All I see is hormonal pubescent boys, Nikki." Mandy teased her and she guffawed at her as if she dare insult the elite elect of Hawkins High.

"No way! There's a few college guys here too, I can tell." She gave a light happy laugh and told Mandy to just hang tight and she would be right back.

Fifteen minutes later, Mandy should have known better, when her friend did not return. She sat down in one of the outdoor chairs and noticed Tina, Tommy, Carol, and a group of people surrounding the keg. Her heart stopped cold when she noticed who they were all cheering for.

Billy. Billy Hargrove.

He was doing a hand stand upside down while they held his legs and was drinking from the keg. Tommy was counting out the seconds for how long he could stay that way and chug without taking a breath. She knew this game. It was the one that had made Steve Harrington the Keg King at every party before this one. This time it seemed he was far too busy dancing with Nancy in the main living room of the house to the music and not even noticing his record was being broken by Billy.

"Fourty... fourty one... fourty two!" Tommy was shouting as people cheered Billy on. She rolled her eyes. Steve was going to be pissed once he realized that the Hargrove boy had bested him and was taking his crown. Did he even know yet that he was here?

Tina raised her hand up in the air drinking from her own cup as Carol looked impressed as all get out. It was clear she too had a thing for Billy, and Mandy had no idea how Tommy was able to accept that, while maintaining his friendship with the new Keg King.

The announcement was made that he was the new champion and as everyone cheered and shouted his name he righted himself and spit up a little bit of the keg beer and shouted in triumph.

"That's how you do it, Hawkins! That's how you do it!" Billy had shouted.

Tommy raised his hand like he was a heavy weight champ and gave him his cigarette back which was still burning. Mandy simply rolled her eyes at the display of blatant male macho egotism.

As Billy walked by with Tommy, who was dressed in a black Cobra outfit from Karate Kid, following him he had seen her out of the corner of his blue bright intense eyes and looked confused as if he



barely recognized her at first.

She stiffened and tried to hide in the shadows but it was too late. He had seen her and she knew it was only a matter of time before he would begin his game of messing with her once he remembered her. The costume must have made it difficult for him to know who she was, but once he got a good look at her, he put two and two together and grinned wolfishly.

Instead of approaching her, however, he walked by her and back inside the house to deal with something urgent she had guessed was more important. When she peeked in she saw Tina following behind him eager to try and dance with him on the dance floor. He barely paid her any attention though as he wiped his mouth and pulled at the toilet paper hanging from the ceiling and rafters of the house to clean himself up a bit.

His muscles were glistening with sweat and beer and she tried hard not to look but couldn't help but notice. He had no shirt on this time and his strong four pack was being displayed for every girl in the immediate area.

Tina had tried to get him to notice her but gave a pout when she saw his attention was focused on someone across the room and he was glaring hotly at whoever it was. That's when Mandy noticed he had locked eyes with his arch nemesis, Steve, who was lost in the music and talking while dancing with Nancy. They had showed up as the couple from Risky Business. Steve was Tom Cruise and Nancy was Cruise's girlfriend from the movie with a white blouse and a black bow tied on the chest of it.

Tommy approached with Billy beside him most likely with the intent to announce his new feat and claim that Billy had taken Steve's title and his crown. They glared at one another and Steve removed his sunglasses, his jaw clenching up, which made Nancy walk away not wanting to deal with the drama.

Billy didn't back down and was staring him into oblivion as if he was going to jump him. Just then Nikki came and grabbed Mandy pulling her inside. She had been talking and dancing with one of Tommy's jock friends who had passed a cup from Tommy and handed it to her

to give to Mandy. The cup had come from where they had all been sitting. Apparently Tommy and the gang had pre made cups sitting over there for people who didn't want to make their way to the kitchen to get some more, so they obliged her with one and Nikki handed it to her friend.

"Here, this isn't from the punch bowl, that shit is way too strong. This is something else... more fruity and tame. It taste's amazing!" She winked and then noticed that shit might be about to go down between Billy and Steve.

"We've got ourselves a new Keg King, Harrington." Tommy taunted.

"Yeah. Eat it, Harrington!" Another jock added in to really push it into his face.

"Oh crap... seems Billy is the new Keg King now. I didn't even know he was here! Didn't see his car outside. Hmmm..." Nikki said pondering this out loud as Mandy took a sip of the fruity drink in the cup. Tommy had gone back over to the couch with his pals and Billy. He was watching Mandy drink from the cup and was staring at her as she sipped it slowly. Tasting how good it was Mandy drank the whole cup rather quickly this time.

"You didn't hear him outside shouting? He did the Keg challenge and won." Mandy was seeing double but she didn't care at this point. Nikki was right here with her so she felt safe.

Before Nikki could think too long on that, getting too excited about a possible show down between two of the hottest guys of Hawkins High fighting each other, Mandy went for another drink and finally got the courage to chug it. She grabbed her friend by the hand telling her new boytoy that she had met there that she was going to borrow Nikki for a bit. She needed to hide in the crowd dancing and blending in so Billy wouldn't even attempt to bother her. No doubt Tommy or Carol had seen her and would tell him where she was.

Mandy didn't want to deal with the aftermath of Billy's wrath when facing off with Steve. She knew his type... he would get drunk, pick a fight, and then most likely go looking for someone to hook up with to take his pent up frustrations out on an unsuspecting female doing

unspeakable things. She did not want to be that target.

"Hey! Where are we going?..." Nikki said slurring her words a bit and laughing but following her regardless while still having fun.

"Just shut up and dance." Mandy said through gritted teeth hoping to God Billy wouldn't see her in the crowd.

He was still sitting on a couch in the corner drinking, smoking, and talking with Tommy while Carol and Tina both fawned over his impressive dethroning of Steve. He had his arm around Tina who looked like she was in heaven. Carol looked a bit jealous but maintained as she chatted it up with Tommy pretending not to care.

"Oh, wow, Mandy, so forceful. I like it... like what's gotten into you, girl!" Nikki teased and went out to the floor amidst the ghouls, ghosts, witches, rabbits, kitty cats, and all manner of costumed teens that were head banging and swaying from side to side.

The music was blasting and all the best tunes were on the lineup. The one in charge of replacing the tapes was taking requests that were written down on a sheet of paper. Some were slow songs, some were fast, and some were simply the top hits of the year mixed in with some old school flavor.

Mandy was really starting to feel the alcohol coursing through her blood by now and it eventually got to the point where she didn't care about Billy, Tommy, or anyone really. She was floating on the floor and grinning with Nikki as they danced together. Occasionally, Mandy caught Billy watching her while smoking his cigarette. He was gazing at her intently with a little smile turned up at the corner of his lips and nodding his head with the music. Shit. He had seen her anyway.

The jock guy that Nikki was flirting with was whistling at the two girls as they danced together on the floor close together and then back to back then switching it up and playfully dirty dancing with one another. In a few minutes, Mandy was actually reluctant to admit she was having a great time after all but she was. With her best friend by her side, great music, and keeping the boys and Billy away from her, what more could she want?

Once in a while she would look around and recall that the target of her avoidance was still watching her, with his eyes never leaving her dancing form. Unfortunately, with all the whistling that Nikki's new loverboy was doing, it had drawn Billy's eyes out on the dance floor which had caused him to focus in on where all the attention and whistling was about, leading his intense gaze onto her.

She glanced in that direction and each time she caught him staring at her. His mouth was open slightly as he licked his lips and thumbed his lower one in deep thought over her. He had been engrossed in Tina's attentions to him and her chattering until he squinted recognizing her on the floor and this time she saw he definitely knew who she was beyond any doubt.

He began getting up off the couch and working his way over to all the dancing people weaving in and out as he pushed some of them out of his way. His grin was from ear to ear as he closed in on the distance between them. Tina looked upset when he suddenly got up leaving her side. Nikki noticed and began to grab Mandy's hands shaking them excitedly.

"Oh shit... Hargrove is looking this way. I think he noticed you and your swaying hips." Nikki laughed and gave a playful hip bump as she teased and congratulated her all in one. This infuriated Mandy and made her sigh in exasperation with a blush invading her cheeks, barely concealed by the pale vampiric makeup.

"Shut. Up. That is so not funny. This was the opposite effect I was hoping for." She rubbed the bridge of her nose and made like she was going to run but her legs were jelly and she felt the drink hit her hard. Nikki wouldn't let her run though and held onto her hands tight.

"Oh, Mandy, oh my god, I'm not joking..." Nikki trailed off getting wide eyed and grinning rather drunkenly at her but still dancing trying to make her not leave but keep going.

"I think he's coming this way." Her friend clasped her hands together excitedly while clapping as she jumped up and down and was about to point to Billy when Mandy grabbed Nikki's hand and lowered it, not wanting her to make it so obvious.

Mandy tried to ditch Billy and his pursuit of her while moving them further into the crowd of moving bodies that were shaking rocking and rolling, hoping he would lose sight of them so she could try to escape to the bathroom in the back and lock it behind her.

"Wait... where are you going? Billy is THAT way!" Nikki shouted as Mandy tried to shush her loud friend and make her escape. Little did she know that Billy had worked his way around the crowd towards the back behind her blocking the direction she was trying to go.

When Nikki looked behind her friend and stopped moving with her, that's when Mandy closed her eyes in a total 'oh shit' moment. She had bumped into him and could feel his body heat against her backside. Could feel the full height of him standing right up against her before he could even say anything to announce his presence.

"Mind if I cut in and borrow your friend?" His voice was right up against the back of Mandy's neck and close up to her ear so the two girls could hear him over the music which had now softened to a more dull roar. Duran Duran's "Hungry Like the Wolf" had stopped playing and it segued into Def Leppard's "Animal".

Nikki grinned and put her hands up surrendering her friend over to him and his hungry eyes as well as his needy hands that had began grabbing onto Mandy's waist to move her body into a rythm dancing with him. With her back pressed up against his firm torso, she could feel his body heat radiating behind her and looked over her shoulder up at his heavy lidded gaze as he looked down to her. He was at least a full four to five inches taller than her. She swallowed audibly and squeaked.

His lopsided grin showed signs of him being very relaxed due to the keg challenge earlier and downing so much beer. He had been drinking for a while but he wasn't quite drunk yet. He looked buzzed but gave a dashing grin, a devilish grin, as he began to grind up against her slowly. He wrapped his arms around her in front placing one large hand on each side of her hips. Mandy looked back at Nikki as if to stare her down, shaking her head 'NO' begging her to make ANY excuse to get her out of this position she was in.

"Hey... she's all yours, Keg King. Enjoy your crown and your lady."

Billy winked at Nikki who started to walk away. Mandy felt utterly defeated and at his mercy.

Mandy growled under her breath at Nikki. God... why? Her face was set in an expression of shock and betrayal.

"You promised!..." She had started to say and she was somewhat furious but too dizzy from the drink to be fully angry or fight it. It was hitting her way too hard. What was in that last drink? She felt like the room was going to give way under her feet, but his strong hands and arms holding her in place seemed to be anchoring her there.

"I only said I wouldn't hook you two up... I never said I would deny him dancing with you. And I won't leave your side, I will be just right over there with Jacob, alright?"

Nikki shot back and wagged her finger then grinned while heading back over to her intended jock boyfriend to dance with him. She made sure not to stray too far away in order to semi keep her promise of keeping an eye on Mandy in case she needed an out from Billy Hargrove.

The jock guy received Nikki back into his arms and smiled at her as they started dancing together again. Every now and then her friend would glance over at her and Billy to make sure all was okay. Eventually she stopped though and was all about her new guy.

"Don't worry, I won't let anything bad happen to her! I'll take excellent care of her, I give you my word!" Billy shouted to her and then made a face like his pride had been wounded as if he had been labeled as a fiend or monster and couldn't be trusted. He winked to Nikki who threw her head back and chuckled.

"I'll hold you to that, Keg King! Don't break her, she's my only best friend in the world!" Nikki shouted back playfully and super drunk. He smirked and turned back to his intended dance partner putting all his focus on her with a serious face. The predator had finally caught his prey. The look in his eyes was feral and possessive.

Mandy gulped in trepidation. He went from serious to playful then

back again. It made her head spin giving her emotional whiplash. He was so unpredictable and that is what scared her the most. She had seen his temper. She had seen him flirt. But she had never seen him when under the influence.

Billy then spun Mandy around twirling her with his fingerless gloved hand and it was only then that she noticed he had no top on but simply his black leather jacket. His muscles were on full display for everyone in the room with breasts and hormones.

"Dude... do you even own... a shirt? Like one that covers... all of you? Or do you just go around like the Hulk all the time?"

She hiccuped and looked dizzy after he spun her. That comment caught him off guard and he gave a gravelly laugh in response then looked back down to her. Okay so this was "charmer Billy". She relaxed a little.

Looking up into his blue eyes that gazed into her sea green ones through heavy lashes she swallowed hard but couldn't make a sound, let alone give a word of protest. He pulled her closer to him and pressed his body against hers. One hand on her hip wrapped around her waist and the other placing her hands and arms around his thick neck and locking them into place.

She laced her fingers together and stared deep into his ocean blue pools as they glittered, her fingers were twining into his blond unruly curls at the nape of his neck which made him grin at the feel of it. As they began their dance "Head Over Heels" by Tears For Fears began to play, giving him the perfect beat for his rhythm as he pressed into her and made her sway with him to the music.

He gazed into her sparkling eyes accented by the eye shadow and gave a sultry smirk at her in response. The music seemed to last forever, as if all time had stopped, while he danced against her and slowly moved her around the floor. He was holding onto her and guiding her in the dance making sure she didn't trip or fall. Mandy looked briefly past him at her friend as if to mouth the words 'help me!' but Nikki was too enthralled by the boy she was dancing and flirting with.

As Mandy's eyes darted all around the room they landed on a very jealous scowling Carol, a confused Tommy, and a heartbroken pouting Tina. Great. That's all she needed was to piss off the party hostess and her brat pack of friends.

The song switched from "Head Over Heels" to "Hysteria" by Def Leppard which eventually lead into "Save All Your Love" by Great White. It was as if fate had intervened throwing all the fast or slow intense love ballad rock songs as he ground into her and lowered his head to her shoulder. His mouth was seeking the sweet spot to press into it gently as one hand held her back and the other held onto her hand their fingers laced together.

The familiar feeling of his breath across her skin made her shiver and she could feel her body reacting to him when he moved his mouth to the arch between her shoulder and neck. She absentmindedly leaned her head and neck to the side giving him more access.

"I know you're the vampiress here, but, I find your neck so soft and tempting. I'll try not to bite ... hard." He said huskily as his lips kissed a trail along her pulse. Mandy gave a slight dizzy induced soft moan as his lips sought along her neck eventually making their way to her ear. He was whispering against her skin and teasing her with his hot breath.

"A vampiress.. mmmmm. Nice costume. Looks amazing on you. This dress really brings out your curves. I almost didn't think you had any hiding underneath all those baggy layers."

He was teasing her and nuzzling back into her neck now with his mouth smelling her skin and hair, and his mouth felt hot and needy, as he pressed his lips to her pale exposed skin darting his tongue out ever so often. She tensed up but didn't stop allowing him to move her body around as they continued dancing to the rhythm of the music. Mandy swallowed nervously wondering when this song would ever end, it seemed to go on forever.

After about three drinks now time seemed to freeze and she couldn't keep track anymore. His hands made his point as they wandered the small of her back and teased a trail along her spine until finally reaching down as if he were going to grab her behind and cup or



squeeze it possessively.

She gave a grunt of protest attempting to push away from him and made like she was going end the dance, so he forced his hands to behave and simply rested them on her hips instead. He obviously did not want her to go or to push him away. He spun her back around to face him.

His gaze was hungry, lustful, excited, and yet intense and calm all in one. His eyes were serious, probing, looking for any signs from her while watching and trying to read her expressions. He needed to know if she was going to cut and run or stay in his arms.

"Why are you doing this?..." she said breathlessly as he held her close to him, their lips merely inches apart, yet he never tried to go all the way. He was close enough just to barely graze his lips against hers.

After the song ended the next one played, and it was obviously one of his favorites, as he leaned his head back onto her shoulder and began singing the lyrics softly into her ear. "Round and Round" by Ratt. He knew every word. Ironically enough even though it was a hard rock song, it was also a love song. Why would Billy know a love song or even care to sing it to someone?

He was acting really weird... this was not the Billy she knew of at school. Did he even realize what he was doing? Billy didn't seem the romantic type to sing to such lyrics, let alone slow dance with a girl. The only traces of his personality she recognized was his lusty attentions to her neck and how he ground his body against hers trying to illicit soft moans and gasps from her lips. When he stopped singing he pondered the question but only answered it with his own question.

"Why not? I'm King here now and I think it's my right to choose who I wish to dance with to be my queen for the night. Don't you?"

For the night. Just for tonight, he had said. It dawned on her. Mandy was no fool. She was just another conquest to him. Another notch for his bedpost. A new flavor for tonight to hang on him. Despite being drunk and dizzy she was starting to get irrate with him and his cruel tactics.

She burned for him and he knew it. It was all his fault and he didn't care how she felt as long as he could break her and bend her to his will. In the end he only wanted one thing. And that was something she would NOT give him. Let him go to Tina or Carol for that. She wasn't here to please any guy or satiate their desires at their whim.

He laughed in her ear when she huffed at him angrily and his long curly blond hair was tickling her neck and cheek in the process. She resisted the urge to thread her fingers through it and gave a small sigh as she could smell him.

"You're very cute when you're angry. The harder you resist the more I'll give chase."

His words mixed with his scent tore her up inside. He smelled so good. Cologne and cigarettes and mint gum and alcohol that almost smelled like peppermint schnapps. She shuddered secretly enjoying the feel of him against her although she would never admit it out loud.

He felt amazing... as if both their bodies fit one another and were made for this. Like two pieces of a jigsaw puzzle that were meant to be together. But the arrogance of his statement still flashed hot anger coursing through her veins. She was a hot mess in his arms and the worst was he knew it too.

"Well... you don't own me, Billy, regardless of your status. I won't be the one to be used by you tonight. You could have anyone in this room. Why not Tina? Or Carol? Anyone but me. I'm hardly worth your time anyways..."

She blushed not wanting to reveal to him her little secret that no man had a right to know about her sexuality. There was no need, reason, or rhyme for him to come after her. And yet, here he was, trying his best to make her his arm trophy. She guessed it stroked his ego something fierce to see the kind of effect he had on someone like her. A real power trip. It fed him and sustained him to try and break her will.

"I'm... not... your type." His breathing was rapid in her ear as if it was really getting to him that she wouldn't play his game. She knew she

was acting wrecklessly with someone so dangerous fueled in lust, violence, and alcohol. Put them all together and you had Billy Hargrove knocking down your door to get in. Like the big bad wolf who huffed and puffed to devour the spoils inside. Her body was made of straw and not sturdy brick. She stood no chance against him, it was futile.

She tried to choke out the words but with the way he was pressed so close to her, the feel of his bare muscled chest meshing with her soft cleavage slightly exposed by the black V-neck vampire gothic dress, and how his lips were grazing her neck and moving up to nibble a little on her earlobe, it was just too much to handle.

He felt like a raging fire against her body and she was going to get burned. His flame would engulf her and reduce her to ashes before him if he didn't stop. And she knew he wasn't going to. He kissed her neck and gave the skin a lick with his tongue darting in and out flickering over her soft curve and ran his fingers through her hair making her head tingle with pleasure.

She gasped softly which only encouraged him to do it even more. To drive her wild beyond all her five senses, and the cup of unknown drink that she had wasn't making this any easier. It was like an aphrodisiac, or he was, she wasn't sure which one was to blame. It dawned on her that he might have waited for her to get tipsy before approaching her, specifically for this reason.

"I think you have exactly what I need, what I want, and that it's well worth my time to try and claim it. If I didn't feel as such, would I have approached and asked your little friend to hand you over to me? I could have any pick of the girls I want... but tonight... I chose you."

He was nibbling on her neck again moving up higher so he could suck in her earlobe between his teeth and letting his tongue dance along the edge. Her knees weakened momentarily as he pressed his hand tighter to her back forcing her to meld into his body as close as he could possibly get her as if they would become one. His hips were grinding slowly into her with his denim bulge pressing against her core, the dress was very thin after all, and she could feel it. It was apparent he was pulling a "Dirty Dancing" move on her with his own added sense of flare to it.

She tried to keep her head on straight but it was damn near impossible with him this close and his body calling out to hers. The room was spinning and he was overpowering all of her senses and invading her security as well as her sense of control, manipulating her body a little too well. The entire room was moving way too fast falling out beneath her feet and she felt like she was going to faint at this point.

"Billy... I feel as though I HAVE to dance with you. I'm not exactly... being given much of a... choice here." She hiccuped in between her words the alcohol making her feel stranger by the minute. More supple and pliable. More compliant. She felt that she could no longer resist.

He stopped teasing her neck to look her in her eyes and noticed her flushed face and how she was swaying, how she kept trying to keep her eyes open, her lips parted gently. As bad as he wanted to kiss her right there and seal the deal he noticed she wasn't love drunk... but ACTUALLY drunk. For a brief moment, concern instead of humor, danced in his eyes when he noticed it wasn't passion making her weak in the knees, but something more. Did that sonofabitch, Tommy, spike her drink or something when she wasn't looking?

"How much have you had to drink? And have you kept an eye on your cup at ALL times?" He asked earnestly as the song played on. He held her tight to make sure she wouldn't fall just in case.

"Too much. And yet... not enough." She said dreamily as she focused her semi blurred vision on his handsome face, his strong nose, and masculine jaw, the beauty of his deep blue eyes as they searched hers.

"Perhaps I shouldn't let you out of my sight then."

He looked over to Carol and the rest of the group and noticed a very drunk and interested Tommy sitting in the corner where he once sat. Tommy winked at him and he was almost positive that Tommy somehow managed to get a hold of her cup and put something into it. Damn him. Not even Billy would go that far. He saw that Tommy was looking Mandy up and down and it was clear to him that he was having certain thoughts about his dance partner. Billy was a lot of

things, but someone to take advantage of a drunk female, he was not.

If Mandy wasn't sober enough to make decisions then there was no way in hell he would leave her to be prayed upon, nor be the one to take advantage. He is the one that does the preying, but not like this. Not like the lusty fire that was in his unruly jock buddy's eyes. A lot of guys at the party were scoping for drunk girls to take home or put in their cars. That just wasn't his way. But he had heard stories and God and Heaven help what stupid asshole ever tried to do that to Max if he found out, as much as he didn't like her or consider her real family, he would kill the creep who tried if that happened to her.

"No... I have Nikki. She promised..." Mandy slurred a bit but leaned her head against his chest almost as if giving up on fighting him over it anymore.

"Well, Nikki seems to be a bit preoccupied at the moment. Come outside with me and get some fresh air a bit. We can just sit and talk." He stopped swaying and moving with her as the song ended and made a move to lead her out the back doors to the back patio.

"No, Billy. I know... you. Talking isn't what you do." She stumbled a bit and Billy caught her keeping her upright. Tommy was downing his drink and waiting for a moment when Billy would move on to another girl and leave Mandy unaccompanied. He didn't know why, other than what little of a moral compass he had, that it bothered him so much. Normally he wouldn't care. But this was a soft girl. A vulnerable one. And damnit it all to hell if he wouldn't feel responsible if he left her all alone in such a state.

"Damn... you sure are a light weight aren't you? Just trust me. I know that's hard considering but you have my word I won't pull no moves when you're like this. I promised your friend, didn't I?" Mandy looked up at him as he put an arm around her and guided her outside.

As they were walking out, he had worried Tina might make a stink, but she was now dancing with other guys most likely trying to act like she didn't care, and then got caught up in the drama between Steve and his lady in the kitchen. He had noticed she had red all over her outfit and was rushing to the bathroom with former king Steve following her looking apologetic and guilty.

"Wow... trouble in paradise." He said laughing as he walked her out the back door. He hollared for everyone outside to clear out the area and either go in front of the house or back inside. No one wanted to mess with him or question him so all of them did as he told them to and it was just the two of them.

He found a reclining lawn chair and picked her up to gently lay her in it. As she laid there resting he asked her how many fingers he was holding up. She grossly miscounted and he shook his head realizing she was a lot more drunk than he had originally thought. Nikki rushed outside to ask if Mandy was okay and Billy told her he would take care of it. He instructed her to go back inside and get a wet wash cloth and some water for her friend. She nodded sobering up, and seeing her friend laying there like that, she wrung her hands with worry.

"Go! Now!" He said and she bolted back inside to gather the required materials.

"Okay... Mandy, I need you to do something for me. You are most likely going to be sick soon so I have your friend bringing you something to ease your discomfort. You are going to need fluids in your body. It's going to make you feel like shit. And you will most likely vomit. There's no way around it. You have had too much and your system isn't used to it. You're going to be okay it's just... your body is slightly in shock."

"Am... am I going to die?" She asked looking at him opening her eyes long enough to try and be serious but she started laughing at the stupidity of her question. In her drunken state she was too loose and not fully aware of the danger she was in. He couldn't help but laugh a bit at her lack of composure but tried to console her.

"No, you're not going to die. You'll just get a little sick and purge. Okay?"

With that, Nikki came back and ran over with the items and handed them to Billy.

"Oh shit... oh shit... is she going to be okay?" She asked feeling true terror over her ailing friend.

"Fuck, man, this is all my fault. Her parents are going to kill me. MY parents are going to kill me..." Billy turned and glared at her.

"No. This is Tommy's fault. I'm going to deal with him later. Just chill out, okay? I'm going to get her to drink this and try to get her to bring it all up. She will be okay in a few minutes. She just needs to rest and then force it out of her system."

Nikki made a face but nodded saying a soft thank you to him. Billy rolled his eyes. Chicks, man. If they were just a bit more responsible, then he wouldn't have to damage his rep by white knightng for them. But this wasnt Mandy or her friends fault. This was that bastard Tommy who had planned this out intricately. But he hadnt counted on Billy to protect her or help.

"Go back inside. I will handle this. If it gets too much we will take her to the ER."

"Okay... okay..." Nikki nodded and sulked off back inside the house still looking at Mandy but trusting him to keep her safe and care for her. It was clear her night of partying was done now that the reality of the dangers of teen drinking for lightweights like Mandy was sinking in.

"Oh god... my head hurts..." Mandy moaned but tried to lay very still as he loomed over her handing her the bottled water.

"Here. Drink this. I'm here so don't worry. I won't let anything happen to you. I got you."

He growled in his throat still pissed off at this whole situation. Even more so he was pissed at Tommy. That asshole had gone too far. He caught himself looking at her as she lay there on the chair. He was a mix of emotions tonight. This wasn't like him at all. He had better things to do than to play nurse maid to a drunken girl who couldn't hold her alcohol. Still, he felt it only right to keep an eye on her and make sure she would be okay. He didn't need to be culpable if she had died choking on her own vomit or from alcohol poisoning. Worst case what if she ODD on whatever Tommy had slipped in that cup?

He helped her sit up and placed a hand behind her head putting the

bottled water to her lips and helping her to drink. He then placed the cool wet washcloth on her forehead.

Whenever someone tried to come outside he barked at them to get back inside and let her get some peace and quiet and fresh air. They would run back inside and were terrified of him. Well, at least his reputation was still holding up as the town's resident badass after all, enough to keep shitheads like that in line.

Looking back at Mandy he saw that she had passed out on him. He tapped her face trying to get her to wake up. She needed to get this out of her stomach but it appeared she was unable to do it.

"Mandy! Mandy, stay with me, Mandy, please!" No response. His heart leapt in his throat.

Within seconds he knew what he had to do. Wasting no time he pulled her into a sit up position over the chair and panicking, he had to slip both his fingers into her mouth and down the back of her throat. If she wasn't capable of doing it, he would have to. Working her gag reflex nothing happened at first and he started to freak the fuck out. She was unresponsive.

He patted her on the back hard several times and checked her neck for a pulse. Thank fuck, her heart was still beating but very feint. She was beginning to slip away. He kept using his fingers to try and induce her into purging it up and after a few minutes, she stirred and groaned and began to get sick.

She woke up and began to drunkenly slur and complain of her stomach feeling sick and like she was ready to purge the alcohol. She began to heave and he held her upright leaning over to the ground but got out of her way as her body did what it needed to.

Within minutes of emptying her stomach of whatever it was her drink was spiked with along with everything else she looked briefly into his eyes as if to say 'thank you' and had grabbed his hand. Shortly after, she blacked out and had passed out on the ground but before she hit the bottom, he grabbed her and held her up. Nikki came back out still drunk and trying to stand. It was clear she was not going to be able to drive her home tonight.



"Oh... god... I need to get her home..." Nikki tried to say with tears in her eyes.

"No. You can't drive. Where is Nancy or Steve?!" Billy asked her while wiping Mandy's mouth with the rag and then picked her up and hauled her over his strong shoulders. She was completely out.

"They're... they're gone. They had a fight. Jonathan took Nancy home and... Steve is gone." Tears were welling up in her eyes. Billy cursed under his breath.

"No way is Tina, Carol, or that ass Tommy going to take her. I WILL do it."

Nikki nodded and thanked him for being willing to drive her home safely. She reached into her purse and tossed a spare key to Mandy's house.

"Here... take this. I have a spare for emergencies. Her parents aren't home right now they took her little brother out for Halloween trick or treating. Will you please... please call me and let me know she is okay?" She looked frantic but far too smashed or she would do it herself.

"Yeah, I can handle this. Don't worry, I won't do anything to her I will tuck her in and stay with her until she wakes up. I will have her call you asap, alright?" Nikki nodded and pursed her lips tight with worry.

"Thank you, Billy." He grimaced and hauled ass to take Mandy out the back yard gate to his car parked a few blocks down from Tina's.

"Nikki, keep your trap shut. Don't breathe a word of this to anyone, or else. If this gets out and word spreads around..." He trailed off as he glowered at her and she nodded solemnly feeling terrible and guilty for not being able to care for her own best friend. She thought he was talking about how he didn't want anyone to know he had done a good deed. But actually, in his mind, his concern was more for Mandy and the whole town and school talking about her. He didn't want that either.

"I won't. You have my word. Just... get her home safely please." Nikki frowned and stood there not knowing what more she could do.

They exchanged a serious glance to one another and he nodded as he walked her out the side gate and all the way to his car. Opening the passenger side car with one hand with his keys he gently laid her into the seat and buckled her up keeping her head up and turned to the side near the window just in case which he had rolled down.

He thanked the stars that he knew where she lived, since she was conveniently enough his neighbor across the road, and he put the petal to the metal as he roared down the street in a rush to get her home to the comfort of her own bed.

All throughout the drive she mumbled and muttered in her unconsciousness, and he kept stealing glances at her from time to time to keep checking on her as he sped towards their street, his hands gripping the steering wheel so tight with worry that his knuckles were white.

"Tommy, that fucking bastard. He will be lucky if he has a face left once I get through with him." Billy swore up and down as he fast approached their block. He knew Tommy was one of his crowd and people but he wasn't going to let him off about doing this. He could have killed her. Popular or not the guy was sick and he could have taken an innocent life tonight. That was too much for even a guy like Billy to let slide.

Mandy stirred but she was still out of it. When he stopped the car he quickly got out and rushed over to her side. Picking her up he slumped her temporarily against the car shutting her door and locking up the Camaro. He prayed to all that was holy that his family was asleep at this hour and had not been woken up by the sounds of his car or seen him with her slumped over his shoulder cave man style. What would they think of him and would they blame him for this?

He hurried to walk up her driveway and leaned in still trying to hold her. She was pretty light but it was still hard to unlock a door while holding a body over his shoulder. He finally managed and unlocked the door guessing no one was home since no cars were parked at her

house.

Rushing to shut and lock the front door behind him, he had to carefully haul her up the stairs and guess which room was her bedroom. When he saw the girly stuff and the bed with all the stuffed animals on it he had hoped he picked the right one.

Her long black hair was wild and arrayed all over her face neck and shoulders and it had gotten into his face while carrying her. He gently laid her on the bed and unzipped then pulled off her boots but that is as far as he would go. No way was he being blamed for a date rape drug tonight.

Sometimes, doing something right lead to being accused of doing something wrong. Good deeds could go punished if misconstrued as something else entirely. No good deed goes unpunished. He had learned that lesson before when he was younger and even more stupid and wreckless than he was now.

Her costume was surprisingly clean considering she ralphed everywhere, and thanks to him holding it back and away from her face, so was her hair. Pulling back the covers he put her in the bed and covered her up and turned on a small nightlight she had next to the bed. He pulled up a desk chair and positioned it near the edge of her bed resolving in himself to stay in the chair. Just in case her parents would come home he had made sure her bedroom door was locked and he would hide in her closet if he heard footsteps or voices.

He did not want to leave her there until he was sure she stayed alive and breathing all through the night. Before relaxing in the chair which was sort of too small for him and his thick frame and long legs, he moved her trash bin over to the side of her bed and made sure she was laying on her side in case she had anymore accidents.

He sighed and watched her as she slept, almost soundly, and without realizing he had done it, he reached out his hand to move her hair off to the side of her porcelain face and held her hand while waiting to see what would happen. Checking her pulse on her wrist he let out a nervous and worried smile seeing that she would potentially be okay and would just have to sleep it off.

He resolved that he would exit out of her window and hop the fence to her yard back over to his place as soon as the sun came up. She need not know he was ever here or that it was him who brought her home safely to her bed. That would just raise more questions and doubts about him to her and somehow he knew he would get blamed for this.

"Billy... please don't go."

She had said in her sleep as he watched her. He was shocked to hear her say his name in her addled sleep state. He gently stroked her cheek and told her to rest and that it would all be okay. In this moment he could freely be soft and gentle because there were no eyes to pry or to judge him. He smiled slightly when she had whispered his name. She was safe now and come hell or high water, Tommy would pay for what he had attempted to do tonight. He would make sure of that.

\* \* \* \* \*

## 15. The Reluctant White Knight

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

### **THE RELUCTANT WHITE KNIGHT**

#### **Summary:**

Billy at the request of a drunken Nikki is asked to take care of her and bring her home to her bed safe and sound. Nikki gives Billy a spare key. Steve takes off after his fight with Nancy who leaves with Johnathan later.

No one is able to take Mandy home but Billy and he doesn't trust anyone else to do it. He protects her from Tommy and the cruel gang he hangs out with while she is sick at the party.

He gives her a lift and brings her home safely then puts her to bed keeping a watchful eye on her all night until they both fall asleep. She dreams and nods off first and he falls asleep by sunrise near her bedside. The morning after is going to be FUN... :D

.....

Billy had fallen asleep in Mandy's chair while staying up practically the entire night to watch her. He had made sure she was breathing and safe, true to his word, but his eyes eventually got heavy and he found himself dozing off no longer able to keep himself awake.

He placed the spare key on her night stand and slumped into the chair yawning as sleep was trying to take him. He had gone all night without smoking since he decided he wouldn't do that in her room. So he vowed to have one as soon as he left her going out the window by morning to make up for his lack of nicotine intake.

With the stubborn night giving way to imposing day in just a few hours the sun was now beginning to climb over the horizon brightening up everything and chasing away the cold starlit darkness outside. A cold misty atmosphere was creeping upon the lawns of all houses on the block with frost covering each blade of grass whitening the deep green to a lighter shade making them shine with a coating of ice. Eventually the frost would semi thaw out with the heat of the sun turning it into morning dew as it climbed higher in the sky. But that wouldn't stop the Autumn chill from freezing people as the wind blew and Winter was fast approaching.

Halloween Night was long behind them now bringing the first day of November and the warm sunlight was now beginning to filter in through her bedroom window. Thin bright beams of yellow and white strands were thickening up as they reached through and beyond the blinds, getting closer to them and the middle of the room. They were falling over his face as he slept but didn't touch Mandy at all as her back was towards him and away from her window while softly snoring and dreaming.

After listening to her talk in her sleep for a little while he heard some interesting and telling things from her one minute and then incoherent babble the next. He had shifted himself into a semi comfortable position in the chair as best as he could throughout the night. Billy was amazed he managed to sleep at all given his circumstances. He miraculously had fallen asleep just before dawn came and kept his word to be a faithful guardian throughout the night making sure she would be okay before he fell into an uncomfortable slumber.

Mandy was dreaming but she couldn't remember much of what they had been about. She slowly opened her eyes after a few moments of stirring awake and lay there for a minute trying to remember the night before. She waited for it, the disorienting feeling of coming out of deep dark subconscious into hazy awareness, but those lost bits of information never came to her. There was a huge gap in her memory from the time of dancing with Nikki at the party to being here laying in her bed.

She almost thought she could remember something and caught little traces that shortly evaded her but they were like blurred images flashing through her mind. As she tried to piece it all together she found it to be nearly impossible to hold onto anything that flitted past and her stomach felt awful. All she knew was she was here in her room and in her bed, fully clothed, but missing her boots. It was quite possible she had the mother of all hangovers. Just how much did she have to drink last night?

She looked and saw her black boots unzipped and on the floor next to her desk chair, which for some odd reason, had been pushed closer to her bed and nowhere near her desk. It was then that her sleepy eyes that were not quite yet adjusted to being awake also noticed another pair of boots next to hers but they were attached to some long and very strong legs. Long legs clad in denim jeans sticking out diagonally from a form sitting in the chair.

Moving her gaze upward slowly following the length of them as she slightly lifted from her bed in a small panic. She blinked a few times and saw the rest of the form that was seemingly asleep in her chair. His strong abs were exposed, in fact his entire torso along with his neck and shoulders were uncovered, and he was sprawled out in an impossible position that looked like it would hurt once waking up from it. The black leather jacket so familiar to her was draped over the back of the chair and hanging on the corner. His skin was tanned and looking warm to the touch as he slumbered on not aware that she was up.

Billy had his head rested on top of his arm as a makeshift pillow which was also pressed onto one arm of the chair to support him. His other arm was dangling over the other side. He was supporting his strong chin to help prop his head up and she was amazed he could

fall sleep like that, almost as if in cat nap mode. His back was curled up and slightly arched sideways but at a half twist so not completely resting on his side.

She noticed his legs were way to long to curl them up or fold them indian style so he had to kick one leg over his other one that was completely stuck out stretched at full length in order to let his bent leg rest over his knee. It was obvious her chair was far too tiny and cramped for his larger imposing body. His back would end up killing him once he woke up after a night of sleeping like that.

She looked at his peaceful sleeping face and noticed how calm and innocent he looked when he slept. No anger on his face, no grinning or charming expression, just a normal sleeping boy who looked so serene. It almost made her want to reach out and touch his golden curls and to stroke his smooth face along his strong yet relaxed jawline. His eyebrows were rested still and well shaped and she couldn't help but admire his long dark lashes and how they were beautiful in the morning light.

He reminded Mandy of a sleeping angel. A guardian angel that had apparently watched over her in the night. His breath was steady and the rise and fall of his chest suggested total surrender to his quiet and peaceful surroundings safe in her room despite the horrible hardwood chair he had to sleep in.

She could smell alcohol on both him and her own self and it was sort of overpowering in her small room.

*Oh, God. What happened? What did we?...*

Suddenly it really hit her hard while coming fully out of her sleep addled drowsiness as she had been gazing at this sleeping Adonis for a few minutes that felt to her like an hour. She had been too blinded by his handsome features to fully register it until now. Her eyes went wide at the realization and she quietly attempted to jump up from laying down in her bed while trying not to wake him in case he got angry or confused at the sudden noise of her shifting around.

What if he had drunkenly passed out too and didn't remember any of this either? Had he been in that chair the entire night?...



And just what the hell was Hargrove doing sleeping in her room in the first place? How the hell did he get into her house? Even if he had gained access through her window, which was locked anyway from the inside, there's no way he would have been able to bring her up the side of the house and through the window to get her into bed.

She noticed a shiny key resting on her nightstand beside her bed. It was Nikki's key she had given to her a few years back. How did he get a hold of it? She must have given it to him for some reason unless he was also a notorious pick pocket and crafty enough to take it when Nikki was possibly smashed from drinking last night.

As it all sunk in that he had stayed the night after bringing her home it became apparent that he had put her in bed, covered her with her blankets, and had been the one to remove her boots as well to make her more comfortable. She worried about her parents finding out about him being here as he slept over. What if they had come in here to check on her and had found him here? Looking to the doorknob she saw that he had also taken care of that by locking it from the inside just in case.

Something stirred within her when she realized that he had not been presumptuous and rude enough to lay in her bed beside her but he also hadn't been drunk enough to lay on the ground despite the fact that his strong muscular body could have probably handled the hard floor. Instead he humbly opted to take her desk chair and had faced it towards her. To keep an eye on her all night until he had fallen asleep. That much she was certain of.

Upon figuring out he removed her boots sometime in the night she flipped her covers off of her as silent as possible and inspected her body everywhere just to be sure. Her dress, her tights, everything felt normal and in it's place and undisturbed. She didn't feel any different anywhere on her body and no marks were left behind. He seemed the hickey giving type so she was positive he hadn't done anything to her in her sleep or possibly while she had been drunk.

"I didn't touch you, rabbit. Although I'm sure you would have liked that." His deep morning voice and his laugh suddenly startled her and she jumped then turned her gaze back to him.

He was awake now and was stretching his body out mildly grumbling about the position he wound up in and the hardness of the chair. He turned his icy blue eyes to her and gave a cocky grin to match his bold words.

"How you can study in this thing is beyond me. You need a softer chair." He yawned and rubbed his eyes and sat still for a moment waiting for her to explode at him in anger once she let his words sink in and the fact that he was here.

"Billy... what happened last night? What are you doing here? Did you bring me home?" She said crossing her arms and giving her best feisty 'I want you to spill it' look she could but it was more a confused expression as her brows knitted together.

"A thank you would be nice. Rude much, princess? You're welcome. Also, do you want the truth or do you want me to sugar coat things and water it down for you?"

He grinned and the innocent former sleeping angel was now replaced by the antagonistic devil sitting before her. He folded his arms and a slow devious smile spread across his face as, curling his attractive lips, as he realized she truly did not remember a damn thing about last night. Oh how easy it would be to have fun with this. He could not resist.

She didn't respond, simply waited silently for him to continue. Her stare was beautiful even with her hair disheveled and her eyes puffy from a hard nights sleep. Her round soft face beautiful even when angry or impatient. He licked his lips as he looked at her full ones tempted to take the kiss he told her he would at a time when he felt it was right.

"Well, first you got really hammered at the party. You did an amazing keg stunt and almost beat my record... almost. Nice try but no, I'm still Keg King. Then you approached me and grabbed me to dance with you at the party. You were VERY forceful while you were all over me by the way and singing to the music like a drunken rockstar."

Her face was terribly red the more he went on to paint up the

evening with his wild retelling of it.

"Things got a little hot and heavy shortly after... and you got very grabby with those little hands of yours and uh... well, you were getting antsy to be alone with me so you asked me to take you back to my car. And from there we did the horizontal tango. Congratulations. I had lots of fun. And judging by the sounds you made, you did too."

Her reddened face was priceless as he watched how upset she was getting. She looked torn and confused between what he said and what was reality. He saw she was struggling with it as she almost believed him but when he smiled and began to laugh at her she had realized he was full of shit. She was flustered to the extreme and she glared at him with that familiar fire in her eyes. He just loved messing with her and seeing just how worked up she got over him.

"The TRUTH, Hargrove." Her voice was firm with him killing off all his fun and he shrugged wiping the smile off his face and trying to look serious.

How could he tell her? How could he sit there and say that Tommy, that sonofabitch, had spiked her drink intentionally with a date rape pill and was waiting for him to leave her side so he could... so he could...

Just the thought of it made his blood begin to boil all over again and he squeezed his hands in fists while trying not to shake with rage in front of her. She noticed and shrank back a bit most likely thinking he was mad at her.

"The truth..." He nodded as he said this giving a long slow sigh.

She just sat and stared waiting for it. He was cornered now. What could he say? He didn't want to hurt her. He didn't want to lie to her. He didn't want to tell her the truth. He deliberated for a few moments.

Either he could tell the truth and disturb and frighten her because of what almost happened to her. Or he could lie to her and completely shred his hardened reputation of not giving a shit and exposing

himself to her in the process as a guy with an actual moral compass. Either way he would be screwed and bad things would follow. When bouncing back and forth between the two options in his head she could see his struggle and it softened her face to him just a bit.

He opted to keep her innocence and to protect her from the full truth telling her a half truth in it's place peppered with unspoken facts he felt she did not really need to know. He would approach Tommy, lay down the law, and deal with him without her knowing. He would shut his mouth and make him deeply terrified of him. He would make sure Tommy would never pull this shit with ANYONE, most of all Mandy, ever again. That was final and there was no taking it back, friendship, kinship, or not.

But now he would definitely have to keep an eye on her around Tommy, because that night he had caught him glaring at them out on the back patio from Tina's kitchen window.

Eventually he would have to confront him. And in order to keep him away from her he would have to lay a claim even if it wasn't an honest one. An empty one to deter him from his hunting down of Mandy and keep her safe. Even if it was a total sham.

Fuck, he may as well shout it to the whole town that he was deep down in there somewhere really a nice guy with morals, a protector, and not a bad ass cold motherfucker that everyone thought he was. He searched within himself often without her knowing it to ask himself if he ever could possibly change... for her. He never quite came back with an answer to that and would harden his heart to it instead.

Looking at her and seeing just how small and fragile she was it made him ache inside and long to pull her into his arms to just hold her there while spilling the truth. Shaking his head and denying himself that impulse to be fulfilled, he cut off those feelings as soon as they had popped into his head. She wasn't his and even if he wanted that, she would never agree to it, because she wanted NOTHING to do with him. That much was painfully clear by how she avoided or tried to escape him when he closed in on her and flirted.

And even if she did, her father would kill him if he knew the kinds of

things he longed to do with his precious innocent daughter. The rifle. It was a symbol of just how off limits she truly was to him. And yet he could not resist attempting to get close to her and it really burned him up that he didn't truly understand why or where these feelings were coming from.

"The truth is you did get very drunk. We danced for a bit. You had a little too much, cheap date that you are, and as we were dancing you almost fainted and began to feel sick. So I took you out back to get some fresh air and Nikki got you some water to drink. Shortly after that you expelled your alcohol to recover and Nikki gave me the key asking me to bring you home. I figured the favor was long overdue to be returned. So don't make a big deal out of it. Consider us even now."

He shrugged as if it really was that simple. No big deal. Picking up some lacey black panties out of her laundry hamper nearby he wiggled them in front of her grinning and she snatched them out of his hands. She began to move around her room tucking away anything she did not want him to see and he softly bellowed his amusement at her. He watched her straighten up a bit and then turn to face him once more.

"Think you got enough stuffed animals in here? It's a damn zoo." He said grabbing some of them and checking them out. She ignored his baiting comments, snatching one of her plushies away from his hands, then sitting back down on the edge of her bed sighing with her head in her hands.

"Why didn't Nikki bring me? Or Steve... or Nancy?"

She was narrowing her eyes at him now. It was almost like anyone taking her, besides him, would have been preferable. Even Tommy the scumbag who had plans to take advantage of her might have been more to her liking than him.

He growled low in his throat recalling how Tommy had been sizing her up from across the room waiting to strike as soon as Billy might leave her in the crowd. He had evidently foiled his plans so no doubt he would be pissed today at Billy sore that he didn't get what he wanted that night.

Mandy noticed the look in his eyes and he was miles away and upset. Did he know something about last night that she didn't? The missing pieces from her memory? She waited for him to answer but wanted to ask him so many questions she honestly felt he wouldn't even bother with. Something went down last night, she knew that much.

"Too drunk. She's almost as wreckless as you are. Same thing with the former keg king and his nerdy little girlfriend. You're lucky I was there or you might have passed out on the lawn outside."

He replied matter of factly grinning while fishing in his pocket to finger his zippo lighter. Man, he was dying for a smoke right now. He resisted the urge to sit outside her window in the sun's early rays and have one not wanting to risk her parents seeing him there and her getting in trouble. She was having enough problems as it is right now.

His nerves were on edge and he needed to leave soon or Neil would most likely break his arm or something for not being home and in bed at a reasonable hour. Just another rule that he would use to control him and to strike him down for.

He was lucky he let him go out at all last night but since it was a holiday and a weekend he knew Susan would complain if he didn't. But in his head he told himself Mandy would be well worth any broken bones or bruises he would possibly get from his old man and it startled him that he felt that way. He was also thankful he was there so that Mandy wouldn't have been preyed on by the likes of Tommy or any other guy in the same mindset.

"Anything could have happened to you, ya know. Lot's of drunk guys there that might want to put their hands all over you... or could have... or worse." His face almost showed a soft concern for a moment but he hid it well as he stepped a little closer to her.

"Oh, and you weren't? Didn't?"

She countered aggressively trying to keep her voice down so her parents wouldn't know she had an uninvited and unknown guest.

She looked at him with uncertainty mixed with anger in her eyes at

him and he figured she remembered at least a little bit of what he was doing to her while dancing with her. She most likely thought he was one of those guys, but he would have never took it any further knowing that she was too far gone to make that informed decision.

"Mandy, yeah I drink. Maybe a little excessively sometimes, yes... but I don't get down that way. I'm not a total asshole despite what people say about me around school and I've never forced a girl into anything with me. I wouldn't do that to you, either."

His expression was hardening up on her as if she had insulted him. In a way she sort of did. He did in fact bring her home safe and sound and didn't even touch her, of that she was certain. He had watched her all night and apparently kept her safe from being taken by some strange guy at the party too.

Billy was being level headed in his tone of voice but she could see he was beginning to get aggravated at how surly and ungrateful she was being to him. When she saw his face, a slight expression of hurt and anger on it, and that he was getting aggravated with her grilling him she finally backed off. She knew he was being sincere with her otherwise he wouldn't look so hurt at what she was insinuating of him.

"Thank you."

It was barely a whisper and she looked down feeling guilty for giving him the third degree when he had done her a favor. He didn't have to, he could have left her there sick as a dog. But he didn't. He had taken care of her. This surprised even her because she never thought he would do something like that for her or anyone.

"Don't mention it. No, seriously, don't. Like... ever. To anyone." He said making her furious at not simply being able to just say 'you're welcome' to her. She guessed this was about him having to protect his reputation and hide the fact that he had been involved with her enough to help someone like nerdy little girl like Mandy Hawkins out or even be seen with her.

Before Mandy could respond to this with indignation, her corded phone on her night stand began ringing off the hook like crazy.

Mandy raced over to pick it up before Billy could make a move to do it himself to answer it with a smart ass greeting. It was Nikki and she was sounding extremely distressed asking Mandy a million and one questions without pause for breath.

"Hey! Wait, slow down. Please, I cannot understand you. One thing at a time! Yes. Yes, I'm okay. No he is NOT here. No, he left... like HOURS ago." She lied about him being in her room still not wanting Nikki to think anything had gone on last night between them or was going on right now.

"Lying about me, Mandy? I'm shocked a good girl like you would do such a thing." He said antagonizing her. He guessed the person on the line heard him and asked because she told her it was just her television set.

Giving a slight look of guilt in her eyes to him nonetheless she turned her back to him not wanting to look him in the eyes and giving him the cold shoulder as she cupped the mouth piece of her phone. This made him stare at her at first with humor in his eyes, then confusion on his face, and then slightly annoyed. Did she truly hate him so much she was embarrassed to have someone know when he was around her and felt the need to hide him?

Sneaking glances back at him she saw him go from slight agitation to a full on devilish grin and that he was starting to walk over to her with intent to mess with her hardcore for that one. She saw he was getting too close for comfort and tried to move forward away from his advancing heavy booted steps but stopped. Mandy would have walked away farther across the room but the cord only went so far with very little slack to the line.

Once Billy realized it was her friend Nikki from last night's party on the phone and heard her say he was not present with her in the room, he wanted to toy with her a little bit and make her wish she hadn't said it. She was holding the phone with a death grip playing keepaway with it from him as he playfully tried to snatch it out of her hands. He was most likely going to out her and try to speak to Nikki himself.

"Yeah. Yes I know that. I'm sorry. No, it's not your fault, Nik. I assure



you I am fine. No, NOTHING happened last night. No. No, I slept alone in my bed where he put me." He huffed. At least she got that one right and told the truth about them not laying or sleeping together. He wasn't sure if he should be thankful for that or deeply regretful. If she hadn't been too drunk and under the influence of something...

Giving up on snatching the phone from her to say something flirtatious to out her for her brazen lie, he opted for plan B.

As Mandy stood there talking to Nikki, supposedly pretending to be ALONE in her room without him there, Billy stood behind her and pressed up close against her back with his firm body. He pulled her long dark hair aside from her neck and shoulders very slowly and smiled when she tensed up feeling him do it.

When her skin was open and available for his eager mouth he then put his arms quickly around her curvy hips and waist from behind holding her there so she couldn't run. He began to kiss on her neck and bite it playfully, sometimes sucking as if he were going to mark her up. She panicked not wanting any hickey marks from him where people would see and fire off questions.

The trail of his wet tickling kisses were making her weak in the knees while she tried very hard to keep herself standing upright. He laughed softly into her neck and her hair which smelled amazing as usual, knowing he was getting to her. She bet anything he was trying to get her to make pleasure filled noises in response to what he was doing to her while over the phone so that Nikki would hear her. Payback for lying about him not being there.

Mandy's eyes closed and she tried hard to fight him and slap his hands away from her body but he wouldn't let up. She struggled but he held her tight and kept kissing her neck and shoulders even more for attempting to get away. He tried to keep his laugh quiet so as to not give away the game he was playing with her to Nikki.

Her friend was evidently still talking her ear off about the party and being worried about her. If Nikki found out he was actually there it would ruin his fun and games with her and he didn't want to stop just yet. He was enjoying the feel of her soft warm skin as he kissed her

more urgently as time passed.

Billy kicked it up a gear and moaned ever so softly into Mandy's ear then panted her name hotly into it which made her bite her lower lip. She went somewhat limp in his arms and almost let slip out a small one of her own when he moved to nibble on her earlobe. She caught herself and cupped her mouth letting Nikki drone on and on opting for muffled silence while he continued to tempt her.

Nikki changed from subject to subject. First about Mandy dancing on the dance floor like a maniac. Then about the guy she met at the party. Then about her own blank spots in her memory due to being drunk herself, too drunk to drive Mandy home.

She was swearing up and down that she came to check on her while she was sick outside and Billy tending to her. She told her he had promised he would take care of her getting her home safely. Soon she was apologizing to her almost to the point of tears for being too drunk to take her and admitted to giving the spare key to him.

"Nikki, you did... ummm... you did the right thing. I'm not... ahhh... not mad at all. Ohhh... no not at all." Mandy tried to get off the phone but kept talking not wanting to be rudely silent to her friends apologies. She also, however, was not wanting to accidentally moan over the phone causing Nikki to know she wasn't alone after all.

*Damn you, Hargrove.* Try as she might, it felt very good to feel his warm lips all over her and her legs began to tremble slightly the more he did it.

Mandy was fighting to keep her voice even and not shaky, breathless, or hitching each time he teased her skin with his skilled tongue and lips.

He whispered things in her ear that was setting her face on fire. Dirty things. Things she would never dare to repeat out loud in front of anyone besides her. But the way he did it wasn't slimey or gross but rather seductive and it made her feel strange in her stomach. That fire she felt while dancing with him at the party and when she had her first kiss with him was beginning to burn within her once more.

"Nikki, I will tell you all about it at school tomorrow, alright? I have to go." She was trying to rush her off the phone so Billy would stop. He grinned not wanting the fun to end just yet redoubling his efforts to get his fill of her before she hung up with her friend.

Suddenly he moved his hand lower reaching up under her dress and touching her knee with his fingers making slow circles over her it. His fingertips tickled her deliciously and then without warning started sliding up her thigh. Climbing higher, and higher, and higher...

It was getting harder to not give in and whimper at how good he was making her feel. But once she felt him putting his hands up her dress she spun around quickly and pushed her hands off on his chest lightly to make him back off and see she was serious.

He winked at her and she mouthed the words 'stop' to him silently while cupping the phone with her hand so Nikki wouldn't hear. This only made him smirk even wider and his eyes danced full of amusement at her struggle. She loved every second of it as much as he did and she couldn't deny that.

He moved to sit on her bed while she glared at him. He grabbed one of her plushies, a rabbit, and made it move with its head and paws like it were a puppet hopping it along her bed then acting like it was her while petting it. She rolled her eyes. God he was so immature. Remembering her friend she went back to finish the conversation.

"It's fine, Nikki. No, I'm not mad at you. Good. I'm glad you met a nice guy, that's awesome. Yeah... yeah, I'm okay, just had something caught in my throat is all. Just a little hangover. Yeah, I'm good. Okay. Yup."

*God I'm such a horrible liar.* She thought.

Billy grinned knowing he was what had made her sound like that to her friend on the other line. He put the plushie down and was looking through her stack of books. Her eyes got wide seeing some of her naughty romance novels looking through the stack. He found the female classy equivalent of a teenage boys skin mag collection. Running over to take them from his hands she tried desperately to

get Nikki off the phone with her as she wanted to hurry him out of her room now.

"Okay, I love you too, Nikki. I will see you in school tomorrow. You can tell me all about Jacob then. Okay. Bye bye."

Hanging up the phone practically slamming it she whirled on him with anger flashing in her eyes as how he was intruding on her personal life in her room.

"Jesus, Billy, that was a really messed up thing to do." She folded her arms. He guessed she was speaking about him trying to get her to moan over the phone.

"What I did was messed up? You're the one who told your friend I wasn't here. Not only did you lie to your friend, you bad girl, but you also insulted me somewhat. I'm wounded. If that any way to treat the one who rescued you? By not even acknowledging my existence? I'm VERY offended, Mandy. Hurt even." He was mocking his pain while grinning through his speech and being cheeky with her.

"Okay, fine, but I didn't want her to think we... well that we were... that we..." He looked at her lifting an eyebrow still grinning.

"Going steady? Or sleeping together? Which one? Because to be honest, I'm interested in both." He turned the corner of his mouth up slyly and she gulped feeling breathless before him again.

"Wha-what?" She stammered. The room was suddenly too small and he was very overpowering in his presence being there.

"You heard me. I think I deserve a reward. How about that date I've been asking you for a long time now? Go out with me. Tonight? What do you say, Mandy? Don't leave a guy hanging." He laughed and simply sat there waiting for her answer.

"Ummm. No. Besides, I have to babysit my little brother tonight. I promised my parents I would since they let me go to the party last night. I'm full up so I can't."

She wasn't lying this time but he looked at her as if she might be. She tried hard to breathe with the way he stared at her. His half naked

body looking so fit and powerful, along with his blue eyes that were so hypnotizing, it was just too much for her. Especially being alone with him in her room near a bed and her parents either asleep or already gone about their day. He was every girl's fantasy and she had him right here in her room with her all to herself.

His eyes looked into hers in a hard stare searching as if trying to tell if she was being truthful with him or not. Finally easing up, he gave her a knowing playful look and then fake pouted at her playing it off as if he was hurt. If this was another one of her fibs, he couldn't read her very well, so why not just act like he was disappointed instead?

"Okay, well, you tell me when you will be able to pencil me into your little schedule. Until then, I will see you in English, cupcake." He was getting up to head over to the window to leave and reached to grab his leather jacket from the chair shrugging it on. He fixed his curly hair in the back bringing it out of the collar so it wouldn't tug.

Mandy rejoiced in him backing down. She had put up her anti-Billy wall again. He shrugged after a minute clearly giving up for now. He could always wear her down with time to get what he was after. Eventually, he WOULD get that date out of her. She could count on it.

"Well, rabbit, as fun as this conversation has been, you're fine now so I'll take my leave."

He REALLY wanted that smoke now. Spurned by Mandy and seeing how beautiful she was knowing he could tempt her to give him at least a little something for saving her last night, it would be too easy to do while being alone in her room with her like this. He liked for her to play hard to get so he could take pride in wittling her down more and prying it out of her slowly.

As he stood putting on his jacket she couldn't help but stare at his strong bare chest as he dressed. He noticed her watching and winked at her which made her look away and clear her throat.

"Okay. Please don't leave down the stairs though, my parents might be home. There's a rooftop outside my window and a lattuce you can climb down. You can exit through the back gate."

He nodded as he walked over to her window and climbed over the cushioned seats that were in front of it ingrained into the wooden frame for a makeshift couch that was part of the windowsill itself. Drawing the white curtains aside he opened the blinds and unlocking the simple enough latch he gently pushed it up and open. He could barely squeeze his large toned body through it but managed to get through.

He had paused for a moment crouching on her roof as if he wanted to say something to her. His gloved fingers rested on the edge of the window but she beat him to it with one last comment in place of a simple goodbye.

"Be careful. I doubt my dad wants a lawsuit on his hands should you fall and break your neck or something."

She said it as if she wished he would and he laughed at her hatred of him so openly on display. It was a half attempt at being helpful and civil but laced with bitterness.

"Well, we wouldn't want that now would we? If the fall doesn't kill me I guess he would just shoot me, right?"

He took out a cigarette and stuck it between his lips taking one last look at her and instead of climbing down the lattice, he leaped to the grass below in the yard as quickly and quietly as he could.

Mandy rushed over to the window and looked down to make sure he wasn't hurt and had landed safely. He looked up at her grinning at her concern and lit his cigarette. With a flick of the zippo and taking a long drag he smiled at her seeing that she was in fact worried about him after all.

"Well, well, I didn't know you cared. See you on Monday. We can discuss that date in more detail then. Besides, someone's gotta keep an eye on you. You're so wreckless, Mandy."

He mocked in a catty tone with her and then walked away towards the back gate. With a click of the latch opening and shutting he was gone and she sunk down onto the cushions with a mixture of anger and disbelief at his carelessness.

What in the world was she going to tell her friends at school? How would she explain him returning to his old habits of constantly hunting her down while also trying to ask her out again?

Tucker would be absolutely beside himself if Billy intended to keep following her around and not letting her be. Just because he helped her at one party in return for her helping him didn't mean he was her permanent body guard now!

Mandy grumbled to herself and saw that he had been looking at her private stash of her adult romance novels. She blushed horribly. Great, now he had even more ammo to use against her and even more reasons to think she was interested in sexual activities and encounters. Just because she read them didn't make her a... loose girl.

She could only imagine he must be thinking he was the object of that need now and would impose himself in her way even more. He most likely thought since she read about sex in romance novels that she wasn't as pure or innocent as she seemed to him and as such a target worthy of him to chase after.

She rolled her eyes then made sure he wasn't peeping into her room looking up through her window from the yard. She closed the curtains and blinds locking the latch and went to slip off the vampires dress to take a much needed and earned shower.

Mandy would definitely be a liar if she said she wasn't having thoughts about him, his naked torso and strong arms, his handsome face, the sounds he made in her ear while kissing her neck, and his dangerous blue eyes as she washed herself. She found herself panting slightly as the water fell all over her body making goosebumps form on her skin despite the warmth of the water.

She couldn't shake the memory of his body from her mind and it drove her crazy to the point of aggravation while getting ready for her day. She pictured him naked and wet in the shower again as if he were right there with her.

Tonight she would be stuck here babysitting Calvin as per her agreement with her parents and would badly need a distraction. Books were ruined for her right now so perhaps she could ask Nikki

to come over to keep her company. Unless she was busy spending time with her new guy she met at the party.

Going downstairs she saw her parents were just getting up and she had breakfast with her family. They asked her how the party went and she wasn't sure how to talk about it. She told them about the music, dancing with her friend, and hanging out with a few of the girls she knew from school like Tina and her gothy sister Samantha. They seemed well pleased that she had a great time. Mandy was thankful they hadn't caught Billy or hear any of what went on this morning before he left so she was safe from that discussion at the table that would most likely leave her grounded for a very long time.

When telling them about the party Mandy left out the part about getting sick, having too much to drink, and having a sexy rake from one of her romance novels magically come out of the pages into real life only to wind up bringing her home and then staying all night with her in her room. They would never let her leave the house after school ever again if they ever found out.

Her parents caught up with her about Calvin's night out trick or treating, how many compliments he got on his cowboy costume, and how much candy he scored. Her father asked her to help them check the candy tossing out the bad ones that weren't tightly sealed or had no air in them so Calvin could eat some later. She did as they talked and ate breakfast, sneaking a few pieces for herself much to Cavlin's verbal displeasure, and they eventually left to run errands and have their own day out together leaving and her brother to enjoy their day.

Putting on cartoons for him as he sat on the living room floor, she rested on the couch attempting to read one of her favorite books and zoned out passing the day away. But she kept remembering Billy's beautiful smile and his amazing feral eyes. She would get no peace from him now because if he wasn't near her physically then he was always on her mind.

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## 16. Alpha

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

### **ALPHA**

#### **Summary:**

Steve and Nancy have a fight long before Billy takes Mandy home from being drugged and drunk. Johnathan was at the party and witnessed the fight. He asks Samantha where she took off to so he can check on her. He winds up taking her home safe and sound and then picking up his little brother Will going home for the night.

Monday at school, Tommy does something that enrages Billy making him step up to the plate to protect Mandy. Much to her trauma and being thankful to him, she tries to keep Billy out of trouble for defending and protecting her, but she is still mad at him for his possessiveness of her. He finally persuades her into allowing his protection to keep Tommy away from her.

Nancy catches up with Johnathan. After remembering he brought her home safely and is actually a good guy... she has a

lot of questions for him. Particularly pertaining to the photographs he took last year of the private pool party at Steve's. That picture of Barbara at the pools edge has been on her mind constantly... and she has wanted to approach him and ask for so long but never had the guts to. Now she wants answers and decides to try and solve the case with him, originally suspecting him, but now convinced he is innocent and can quite possibly help her figure it out.

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"Nancy stop!" Steve shouted trying to pull the cup from her claspng drunken hands defiantly resisting him.

"No! Steve!" Nancy had yelled back trying to keep a hold of her drink.

They went back and forth like this for a while until the cup slipped from their tug of war over it and spilled the spiked punch concoction all over her clothes.

"What the hell?" Nancy had said in a half yell half incredulous whisper as the partygoers stopped and looked at the mess. Steve tried to apologize but it was too late. Nancy was walking away from him angrily as he helplessly trailed behind her calling out to her.

Johnathan Byers had watched the argument between Steve Harrison and Nancy Wheeler unfold from afar while looking around feeling out of place just being there. He still had no real clear clue as to why he had showed up. Nancy had invited him earlier saying he should go. He thought about it and decided last minute to take her up on her suggestion when he saw how miserable Will was for being chaperoned by him.

The shouting between Hawkins High's hottest couple had caught his attention and he felt bad when the entire thing was noticed by the entire room, all eyes on them staring and gawking. Some were gasping and others were laughing. He just felt terrible for her as he looked at the huge red stain all over the front of her shirt.

Nancy's eyes were heavy lidded but still showed anger and disgust while she looked so ashamed. In a clear state of upset, she stormed

off and Steve had followed her calling her name apologetically but to no avail. Johnathan couldn't see clearly where they had gone when they left the kitchen because of all the people in the way moving around and blocking his view.

He was very concerned but somewhat felt he had no right to be. She was clearly heavily intoxicated, dancing and pretending to smile having a good time, and Steve was being a bit overbearing on her for drinking so much. In rebellion of him trying to control her, it had caused the fiasco in the first place as he tried to stop her from drinking more as the night wore on.

Johnathan wished he knew why she was upset causing her to imbibe so much alcohol so fast. As the party hours dragged on he could see she was getting more and more unstable, but could only guess the reason. It could be something she was dealing with personally or it could be something between them that just wasn't sitting right and had finally soured reaching toxic bitter levels.

For a long time, ever since freshman year, he had liked Nancy Wheeler but never had the guts to approach or say anything to her. When he first knew of her she was shy like him. More about studying and keeping out of the spotlight than partying or proving herself to anyone. She had changed since hooking up with Steve but he still had feelings for her despite how different she was now. In his mind, he reasoned it wasn't going to lead anywhere. Often a shy type he would simply watch her from afar around the halls of Hawkins High.

He had no classes with her and even if he wanted to speak to her, she had always been around Steve, Tommy, and Carol. The three of them had given him plenty of trouble over the past few school years but seemed to really go all out this year in taunting and tormenting him. When he noticed she was left alone, most likely drunk, and abandoned by Steve in the bathroom he had walked in to make sure she wasn't passed out. People could talk about him all they wanted but he was a good natured guy who hated to see people, especially females, mistreated.

Thinking back on how hard and abusive the relationship between his mother and father had been, he decided to be a better man than his dad long ago in response. To stand up for those who didn't have the

courage to stand up for themselves and to give advice to those who needed it most.

After asking around and talking to a few of the people at Tina's party, all of them too self absorbed to care and shaking their heads no or not answering, he decided to ask Samantha. Unlike most there, she had been kind to him upon the first meeting and he noticed she was the one keeping track of things more than Tina herself.

She was standing over at the DJ booth picking out some songs when he had caught up with her. With a red cup in hand but obviously still alert and the more responsible of the two siblings, she was looking around to make sure no trouble was started. She smiled when he walked up to her and immediately turned her attention to him. He blushed slightly at this, picking up on that she had a slight interest in him, but he paid it no mind as had always harbored something for Nancy above any other girl.

"Hey, how's the 'guy who hates parties' doing? Your non existent costume still working out for you?" She playfully teased offering him a cup of the strong punch from the bowl and he shook his head but she smiled at him anyway.

"Holding up just fine, thanks. Still not having any fun." He replied back at her just as playful causing her to laugh in surprise at his strange sense of humor that caught her off guard while sarcastically matching her own.

"You know... I'm not even wearing a costume either. Ask my sister, Tina. This is who I really am. I just have the priviledge of getting away with it only one night of the year without being stared at. Kiss. I see my plan is working." Samantha was speaking of how he wrongfully identified her getup earlier at the door and winked at him taking a drink which caused him to blush slightly.

"That's very clever. You had me fooled." Johnathan tried to be polite while also trying to rush to get information out of her. After the laughter between them died down a bit, and once she noticed he didn't want the drink and that he hadn't touched a single drop all night, she pulled the cup away from offering it to him and was still holding it as she looked at him. She could see in his eyes that there

was something he wanted from her that was more important than to slam drinks and make small talk.

"I see the anti party costume extends to anti alcohol as well. Wise choice, Johnathan. This would most likely knock you on your ass if you normally don't drink. I've built up a tolerance to this poison though, lucky me."

She remembered his name from their earlier introduction and was obviously flirting with him which flattered him. Still, he pressed on to ask her what he needed to know.

Samantha was grinning playfully at him while still holding the cup, now unsure what to do with it, as she already had her own she was working on. Before Johnathan could reply a thick heavy set guy he recognized from P.E. class who was wearing a white shirt with a white toga wrapped around him and a laurel wreath crown on his head snagged the cup and chugged it for himself in just a few seconds flat. He burped rather loudly when done pounding his chest and making Samantha scrunch up her face a bit at his rather gross macho display. She rolled her eyes at him but returned her gaze back to Johnathan ignoring it.

"Yeah... ummm sad to say that's a skill I do not possess. Hey, I wanted to ask you..."

Her eyes lit up for a moment.

"Have you seen Steve? Or... Nancy? Do you know where they went? I'm concerned and somewhat a friend of hers. I saw the incident earlier between them. I need to check on her and make sure she's okay." He trailed off watching the gothy girl look around as if trying to remember but he could also see slight disappointment in her eyes and felt bad. It was because he was looking for another girl when she had so boldly put herself out there to him.

"They went towards the back of the house a little while ago. The bathroom I think. Even though I know I marked that one as off limits since it's our parent's and connected to their bedroom. Teenagers." She said the last word dryly and sarcastically sipping from her cup once more as he waited urgently for her to point the way so he could

go after them.

"She was most likely going in there to clean up her shirt. Oh! I also saw Steve come out a few minutes later and take off without her. He looked pretty pissed, actually."

Johnathan looked suddenly stricken and angry at that revelation. Samantha had a worried frown all her own now realizing Nancy was all alone in there. Before he could ask where, she finally pointed to the bathroom down the hall and told him which room would lead him to it. The smaller one was already preoccupied and locked.

"Thank you. Thank you, so much." He started to walk off and she began to follow him setting her cup down.

"Need some help? She might be sick and I could get some towels and wet rags or something..." Still interested, and wanting to help, she was about to go with him when he shook his head and thanked her for offering but declined politely.

"No, it's okay, really. You're busy here and I'm sure she's alright. I'll go check on her. Tend to the party, it's still pretty wild in here."

He gave a weak smile which she returned solemnly and then began walking off in the direction she had pointed out to him. Shaking her head she turned back to the DJ finishing her previous conversation pretty much figuring he could handle it.

Johnathan pushed past all the dancing drunken couples, the wild and crazy teens in extravagant costumes, and doing his best to avoid Tommy, Carol, and the others who loved to make his life a living hell. He raced to the bathroom as fast as he could hoping not to be detected by them but noticed their new leader, the Keg King, wasn't even around.

He was nervous about coming to help Nancy but resolved it was the right thing to do since no one else was bothering to. He would take whatever punishment would come his way for intervening. Even if it meant confronting Steve later in school for being anywhere near her, he would do it just to make sure she was alright.

Nancy had always been kind to him, even when Steve had smashed his expensive camera on the ground, where she had been begging him to stop. To this very day he regretted taking those photographs he had no right to take. When Nancy had looked at him as if he was a creep he could have died on the spot. But that wouldn't stop him from checking on her and if she was too wasted, giving her a lift home as well.

Dodging the crowd of people he finally came to the bathroom door and softly knocked calling out to her.

"Nancy? Is everything... okay? It's Johnathan Byers. Look, I just want to make sure you are alright. Hello?" He cursed himself for being so timid and afraid to just open the door but what if she wasn't decent while trying to clean up her costume? Then again she wasn't answering so what if she was in trouble passed out or sick like Samantha had said?

He momentarily heard noises of a shuffling body and then the soft sounds of what might be her getting sick in there but then complete silence followed. After a minute or two, when he got no response, he put on a brave face fueled by worry and just pushed open the door. Luckily for both he and Nancy it wasn't locked and luckily for him she was fully dressed.

Opening it slowly he looked in through the crack seeing her on the floor sitting somewhat slumped forward. Walking in he saw the huge stain on her outfit and the water still running in the sink. It was a testament to her innebriated failure to correct the mess made when the cup spilled its contents all over her. Turning it off he came to her side kneeling down close to her and frowned.

She was extremely wasted and half passed out leaning against the bathtub. He gently put his arm around her shoulder to lean her forward and then put one arm and hand around her waist. He picked her up to stand and then lifted her in his arms almost effortlessly since she was so light then proceeded to carry her out of the bathroom. Samantha noticed him bringing her out and walked over immediately to offer assistance once more.

"Is... is she passed out? Did she vom? Well, that's gonna be fun to

scrub up later tonight. After party and party of one."

She raised her hand in the air for a moment and then looked over to her sister who was dancing and living it up having a great time obviously suggesting she would be the only one on cleanup duty and that it was a thing that happened often.

Johnathan looked apologetically to their hostess but didn't know why as it wasn't his fault. Still, he felt somewhat protective and responsible for Nancy and was very angry at Steve for leaving her like that.

"I'm sorry. I think she did..." He replied still speaking softly. She shrugged at him.

"Oh well, it happens. Do you need some help getting her somewhere? I could try and dial a cab or something for you guys, I'll even pay for it, but I doubt they will come out here on a busy night like Halloween. Too many kids and people walking so the cab companies don't want lawsuits if their drivers accidentally hit someone."

Samantha snorted lightly going back to her cup but looked as worried as she could in her expression for a girl of her caliber. However, she did notice Nancy was stirring in his arms and mumbling so seeing she was still conscious that seemed to put her at ease. Johnathan couldn't tell the slight difference between her happy face, worried face, and her relaxed face but he smiled back at her for at least trying to help.

"No, it's okay. I'll take her, I've got my car here. Once she's a little bit more alert I will ask her where her house is. Hopefully she can tell me or I might have to park somewhere and wait with her."

He sighed and she nodded most likely somehow knowing he was the safe respectful kind of guy who would never take advantage of a drunk girl. Samantha most likely knew of his reputation around Hawkins and that he was bullied a lot but never got into physical fights with anyone on campus or lashed out either. He was the typical loner type and appeared harmless. She didn't ask any questions but simply stood there for a moment. She snapped her fingers and turned towards the fridge and then to the counter to grab something.



"Here's my number. If you need help or can't find her address... call me. I have my ways." She smiled winking at him and grabbed a pen writing it down on a piece of notepad paper from a pad that had been held on the fridge by a magnet. Tearing off the piece of paper scrawled with her fancy handwriting she handed it to him, her dark makeup lined eyebrows meeting and her black lipstick smile making her white teeth look so bright. He thanked her softly and took the number putting it in his pocket.

"Be careful with her and mind that front porch step! Hope she feels better soon. You're a good guy to do this for her." Samantha smiled then turned to notice people making messes in the living room and rushed over to take care of it.

"By the gods, these people are animals. Hey! Knock that shit off or I'll feed you to my hellhounds in the basement!"

She watched him walk off with Nancy but was once more focused on stopping people from wrecking the house. Johnathan wanted to laugh, to stay and help her, but Nancy was more important and was groaning trying slowly to recover from being so wasted and sick. He pushed through the crowds again letting Samantha do what she needed to do who hollared at them to let him pass by making them step aside and clear a path to the exit.

Tina had been too drunk to care and was still dancing on the floor with her friends while her sister took care of business in her stead. He narrowly dodged Billy's new lapdog crew as he escaped with her out the front door. He had to push through a lot of drunk and inconsiderate people but eventually worked his way free down the driveway of Tina's house.

Once outside in the cool night air, he readjusted Nancy in his arms and took her to his car putting her gently inside and buckling her up. Driving off into the night he hoped she would wake up enough to tell him where she lived.

As he drove he kept stealing worried glances over at her. How could Steve have just taken off like that and abandoned her? He knew they had a fight but to him that was no excuse to do what he did. He was glad he actually came to the party tonight. Despite the hostesses

seemingly having everything under control, anything could have happened to her. Frowning she eventually stirred in the passenger seat. She looked confused and a bit worried so he tried to sooth her by giving her information.

"Nancy, it's me, Johnathan. You're safe and in my car. You were passed out in the bathroom at Tina's party. I'm taking you home. Where do you live?" He focused on the road while she tried to speak and put her words in proper order. She mumbled it and he could just barely hear her. Eventually he got the address out of her and was relieved it was a neighborhood he was familiar with. It wouldn't be hard to find. After a few moments of silence, Nancy lifted her head and looked at him with a glazed bleary look on her face. She narrowed her eyes trying to squint and recognize him.

"John... Johnathan?" She said still quite unsure of her surroundings or how she got here and still not registering it was him she was with.

"Where's... Steve?" Even when abandoned by him, even when embarrassed by him, she still preferred him. Johnathan gave a soft smile but it kind of hurt. Still he knew she would want to know and he had to tell her the truth, even if she wouldn't really remember it.

"He left, Nancy. Right after you two went into the bathroom together. I'm sure he's fine and you will see him and talk with him at school or something. Just rest. I'll get you home."

He wasn't going to talk about the fight. That was their business and not his to get in the middle of. She made a soft barely audible noise and turned over on her side in the seat once more falling asleep as his car continued the journey to its destination.

Pulling up into the driveway he quickly got out of the car and looked to see if anyone was home. All the lights were off so he assumed no one was. It would make it easier for him to get her inside and up into her bedroom where she could crash comfortably.

Her residence had a rather large and long front lawn. The house was half brick on the bottom and half painted white on the second story. The top of the house had three windows complete with black grey shutters. The structure of it was much wider, complete with two

extended smaller rooms on each side of the main section. Three windows were evenly spaced on the top floor and two on the bottom with a front door being on the left side.

It would be a bit of a walk from the curb to the door but he would have to do it no matter how much of a struggle it might be. Johnathan lifted her fragile sleeping form carefully from his car and shut the door behind him with his hip. He walked her to the front of the house with one of her arms slung over his shoulder. She could barely keep pace with him and step with her feet. She muttered something he couldn't make out but he pressed on determined to get her inside.

Not really wanting to wake her again, he tried to find any sign of keys on her but didn't want to go digging into her pockets out of respect for her. He had to know how to get in the house so he had to rouse her at least one more time to ask.

"Nancy, do you have your key? Or a spare one perhaps somewhere nearby the house? I need to get you inside so you can rest." He felt awkward asking but how else would he be able to do this if not with her help?

"The... key..." She said as he picked her up out of the passenger side seat and shut the door grunting a bit as he took her to the front porch of her house.

"It's... under the rock. Painted." She could barely get it out.

"Painted?" Johnathan looked all around the porch and when he finally spotted it, he set her down gently and reached for the location she gave him. Fishing up the key he turned it into the lock and opened the door. Poking his head in calling around before entering no one answered. He sighed with relief. He could only imagine what her parents would think with some strange boy bringing her home drunk in his car.

"Okay... come on, Nancy. We're almost there. Just hang in there a bit longer. Help me move you if you can."

Her head was nodding a bit down to her chest but she complied and

stumbled a bit to get up to help him lift her the rest of the way. Walking on wobbly legs he somehow managed to get her up the stairs without incident and laid her in her bed. Putting the covers over her he made sure she was comfortable and warm watching her for a few moments after tucking her in. He removed her shoes so she could be a bit more comfortable. While doing this he waited to see if there was anything else she needed before he left. He saw her come to just long enough to say his name out loud recognizing him for a moment. It could have been Steve's name... but it was his. It made him smile and feel warm inside hearing that she acknowledged he was the one that had taken care of her.

Once done making sure she was safe and sound, he left the house and locked up putting the spare key back where he got it from. Hopefully, she wouldn't remember much of this the next day but secretly he would cherish this moment between them. He hoped she wouldn't be angry with him or jump to any conclusions. He really liked her but how could she ever like a weirdo freak like him?

That day of her being upset over the photos still stuck in his memory making him feel ashamed to even think she could consider him as a friend if not anything more. Some of the photos had been ripped up, the others taken by Steve, Nancy, and their group. But he noticed how Nancy had picked up some of the pieces and had kept one of them.

The photo of Barbara, her friend she used to hang out with all the time before she went missing, had been the one she kept. Thinking on this he realized that photo was most likely the last time Nancy had seen her before she went missing that night. He was surprised they didn't think he had been responsible, considering the nature of the photos and him being stupid enough to take them.

Shaking the terrible and ridiculous thoughts from his mind he got in his car and decided to drive back to the neighborhood where he had dropped his little brother off to pick him up as per their agreement. Maybe Will would be ready to go home by now from trick or treating with his friends and was as tired as he was. He had promised him he would be back at their meetup spot on time if he let him go out by himself. Honestly, it was irresponsible of him to agree and selfish as well. All because of wanting to actually go to Tina's party and maybe

meet and make some friends or the slim chance of seeing Nancy there and talking to her.

The right thing to do would have been to stay by his brothers side. They had been told about how dangerous Halloween time was, even in a safe neighborhood, and that they should stick together. She would have a fit if he came home alone without his big brother and not returning him safely to the house. He decided to swing by the spot and sit tight waiting for any sign of Will and his buddies.

When they finally showed up they had a little red headed girl in tow with them, a girl he had never seen before in their group. Smiling and waving goodbye to his friends, Will got in the car and they both talked excitedly about their night while driving back home. Johnathan didn't talk much about the party but rather listened and let Will tell him all about what a great time he had. It was getting late and they would both need their rest tomorrow before Monday rolled around for school.

Later on, he would make sure to help check the candy with their mom and her boyfriend Bob. He liked Bob a lot and so did Will. It was a good change from what they were used to with their actual father who was no no longer in the picture nor caring to be. After spending a little time with Bob and their mother, they both got ready for bed tired and exhausted from the excitement of the evening.

Thoughts of Nancy and how kind she was to him swirled in his head as he drifted off to sleep. For a moment he feared Steve if he ever found out he had taken his girlfriend home after he left her there. Hopefully he wouldn't make any trouble for him at school and wouldn't know. He had done his best to get her out of there before Carol and the rest of his buddies would see as that would only bring trouble down on his head for doing a good deed.

(TO BE CONTINUED...)

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## **17. Romeo & His Juliet-The Study Session**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

### **ROMEO & HIS JULIET - THE STUDY SESSION**

#### **Summary:**

After telling off Billy for being overprotective and constantly shadowing her, almost forcing her to ride with him in his car to and from school everyday, Mandy Hawkins is suddenly asked on Friday by their English teacher, Mr Watkins, to help Billy study Romeo & Juliet to get better grades and ace the upcoming test. Because he failed his last few tests, if he doesn't do this he could mess up his chance for going to college with a basketball scholarship. He follows his games seeing raw talent there and wants a future for him.

She wants to say no, but her conscience gets the better of her and she has hope that with a little normal social interaction with him maybe she can get him to slow down a bit, stop flirting so much in class with her, and take his grades more seriously. Maybe even take her more seriously as well, so she can make

him stop once and for all from wanting her, taking down two birds with one stone. Maybe, just maybe.

The date and location is set. Mandy dreads the fact that it will be taking place at his house and most likely his room. With the local library closed and school not being an option over a weekend, this seems to be the only choice. She doesn't want him at her house to charm her parents or dig more into her personal life or be in her room. So Mandy must go to his place. This might be a big mistake but she has given her word to Mr Watkins to attempt to reach Billy and help him learn for the test doing everything in her power to teach him.

Almost as soon as she arrives, Billy tries to show her physically how bad he wants her to try and make her change her mind on that date and to seduce her. If only he paid attention to his studies as good as he did on Mandy's body then his grades wouldn't be a mess.

NOTE: This chapter is really long. 32,000 + words. Sorry guys, I guess I felt Mandy and Billy really needed time together and had a lot to think about as well as to say to each other.

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When Monday rolled around for the new school week Mandy was actually stoked about being there her hopes and expectations of better days very high. It was a drastic change from the dread she normally had over coming in and going to first period due to knowing who would be waiting there for her sitting just behind her as usual.

Things had been going better around school as well as her social life lately. She was getting bolder and not feeling as timid when interacting with people. She was still pouring all her focus into her school work but she was going out more with her friends the past couple of weekends.

In fact, things had been looking up for Mandy ever since she put Billy in his place at school when he had tried to rule over her. He had tried to even control her way of getting around town as well as how she

got to school and back not wanting her to walk anymore but ride with him, even instead of her friends driving her. Evidently he thought his title as King of Hawkins High applied to her as well and their personal relationship.

He claimed he felt it wasn't safe, but more than likely it was his insecurity and jealousy over guys looking at her more often, since she had finally begun to be a more confident and well dressed young woman. She was gaining more acceptance from her peers even being approached and asked for dates who apparently didn't get the message that Billy had put out there that she was his. Instead of celebrating her budding and blooming, he was trying to lock her in a gilded cage for only him to enjoy, his possessiveness rising to intolerable levels.

One day she had decided to confront him about it and stand up for herself making him understand that he was not going to get what he wanted out of her and even risked forsaking the protection he offered her from Tommy to do it. She had finally had enough. Their fight had been pretty explosive and both of them had gotten hurt.

Mandy was proud of herself at least for making a stand and that she was handling Billy better by not letting him get to her as much. She was also proud of herself for hanging out with her friends more often and being less of a homebody, unless of course, she had to babysit Calvin. To help with this responsibility and lighten Mandy's load of it her mother hired a trustworthy sitter to take her little brother most weekends so Mandy could have more freedoms with her friends.

Her parents were also proud of her too for getting out more doing fun activities while still managing to juggle her grades and homework just fine. Katherine and Rick settled for her to watch Calvin on Tuesday and Thursday nights only so she rotated her after school schedule and activities around those days.

Her friendship with Tucker was finally improving again, most notably changed for the better by seeing that she was deflecting Billy more around campus and not getting the rides from him every day that he insisted on since the incident with Tommy. Tucker and her other friends had seen he was somehow being like a bodyguard over her. The blowout with Tommy over what he did to her that day had



completely prompted him talking her into letting him keep her safe.

She could still tell it was clearly bothering Billy that they weren't around each other like they used to be. She noticed the more she denied him the more he had other girls and Tina following him around once more or going for rides with him instead of her after school. It sort of bothered her too, she didn't even know why, but she wouldn't let on to it or think about it and simply forced herself to ignore it. He could see whomever he wanted to just not her. That was why they argued, for her independence, wasn't it?

She was just glad to have Tucker back in her life as a close friend again and that they were talking and hanging out like they used to. Despite his previous unrequited feelings for her driving a temporary wedge between them, they were doing a lot better than they were before. He sat with her in the library some days and she in turn would sit with him, Alex, and Nikki in the cafeteria. They took turns alternating this so everyone could have the social time they enjoyed in their group.

Since Billy was letting her be no longer crowding her as much, and Tucker had noticed, they had talked after school one day and finally worked it out enough to where it was comfortable between them again. He had said he would rather have her in his life as a friend than not at all. Tucker had apologized for being jealous and mean to her over the whole thing.

Mandy had explained that it was a miscommunication of mixed signals being sent from her to Billy, taking blame on herself where it fell, and that she had never intended to send them in the first place. That he had simply taken the ball running with it. It was mostly true but deep down she knew she had liked the signals he sent back to her in return. She would never tell Tucker that part.

Understanding this and being so gracious to her, Tucker even went as far as to say that if she should ever choose Billy to date, despite it not being a very smart choice and him not liking it at all one bit, he would let her make her own decisions and not get angry about it. That he trusted her judgement and he respected that she was her own person.

Tucker had still slipped it in to the conversation that he still held out hope that one day she might come around to liking him and give him a chance should she want to, but he wouldn't push it on her anymore or get upset if she didn't feel the same. She was just relieved that he was finally being mature and getting over his anger of her half loving half clumsy rejection of him that night in her room when they fought. She was thankful that they both apologized to each other too. Not only was it a relief for the two of them but also much to Alex and Nikki's relief as well, making them be their old tight knit happy friendship circle once again.

Mandy guessed that since Billy was seeing other girls again and not bothering to hide it from her that he was making his own stand against her. Still, he had been sort of moody and distant. She noticed he didn't follow her around as much as he used to. Ever since their last argument over her being verbally clear to him that she did not need him to protect her all the time, or give her constant lifts to and from school, she hoped maybe a part of him had finally given up on chasing her.

Maybe she had been able to finally make him see that she didn't want him hovering over her constantly. It seemed he was finally respecting her boundaries slightly more than usual. Sometimes when she would see him looking her way, or see his eyes when he would stop to try and talk to her, she could see that there was a hurt of rejection under his cold mask he had resumed wearing around her. As if he was feigning disinterest and acting like it didn't bother him at all.

Although she freed herself from his grip and he backed down, it had done some damage to his pride as well as to what she supposed they had subconsciously building together. It would have been considered to be a budding friendship between the two of them but it was nipped in the bud when he became too overprotective and overbearing on her. She almost regretted it and it hurt and confused her as to why she would be upset over something she thought she had originally wanted. For him to leave her alone and move on to other girls.

Billy called her from time to time some nights but of the time she wouldn't answer and when she did he would still try to charm her. If he asked her to hang out with him she would come up with solid

excuses politely and softly as to why she couldn't. She would acknowledge him at school but just barely so as not to be rude to him when he approached her first. He was still his usual self, but ever since the nasty scuffle between him and Tommy and him going overboard on watching over her causing their fight, their communication was now strained.

She had done him a favor by driving him home drunk from Steve's and he had returned it by taking care of her after the Halloween party. They both had thanked each other for that so that should have been the end of it. Yet he still wanted more of her. He would still flirt shamelessly behind her sometimes in class but she wouldn't respond to him much unless he was being normal with her. He would pass her in the halls once in a while stopping by at her locker to say hi to her if he was alone and not with another girl and ask how she was. But she would simply wave or just say a simple short hello not going much further with it.

He would sometimes get upset at this but usually he would let it go and tell her he would call later for them to talk about it. Those were the days she wouldn't pick up. They would have interesting light talks some days and heated ones other days when she would shoot him down if he asked to see her. But he would always try again the next day by making her laugh in class or in the library at lunch to try and smooth things over between the two of them.

If he got too close she would shut down on him. Only when he talked to her like a normal person did she even speak to him and eventually he had learned how to treat her better so she would talk with him. It seemed to be working out and everything seemed to be going smooth for a change. But despite all of this, she still saw the way Billy looked at her when he thought she didn't notice. There was still a need in his eyes for her and she tried so hard to ignore it and move on.

Some days were easier than others and it really bothered her to not understand why. Deep down Mandy couldn't help but feel there was something missing despite all things pointing to being better for her both on campus and outside of it without Billy messing with her as much as he used to. Maybe that was why it was so strange. The back and forth teasing between them was gone.

Mandy was even shopping more with Nikki and being more brave to dress nice, not covering up in as much clothing layers as she used to, and with a newfound confidence she supposed Billy had helped bring out of her. Despite their slight falling out, she had helped him by teaching him to be more gentle and he had helped her be more confident, in a strange symbiotic type of way even in just a few short months of knowing one another.

More people were talking to her around school with less animosity or disdain for her and she almost felt in control of her life and social abilities for once. But there was something wrong between her and Billy and she couldn't deny it. It was a missing piece that kept her up at night sometimes thinking about it.

For the life of her she couldn't force herself to approach him to try and fix it. Where would she even start? Neither one of them would apologize for their fight they had last and there had been an uneasy tension between them ever since even if they were respecting one another in passing. It felt like dealing with Tucker only much more intense.

Sometimes she missed talking to him. Missed being in the car with him. She almost missed him messing with her like he used just not quite enough to be brave and approach him to talk things out. Without realizing why, there was a huge hole inside of her that he used to fill and it was weighing on her even through her denial of it while struggling to move on.

Then on Wednesday, Mr Watkins had approached Mandy and talked with her when all the other students, including Billy, had left the room. He had waited to see if she was coming so he could try to speak with her in the hall, but when she stayed behind to talk to their teacher, he left the room looking rather disappointed and lost.

Mandy tried not to notice it but she saw the pain underneath his cool slightly angry exterior. She saw how he was holding himself which wasn't his usual happy or prideful posture. And she saw the chill of his discontent in his stormy blue eyes as he looked away from her and left giving up for today.

"Mandy, my dear, may I speak to you for a moment? Do you have

time?"

Mr Watkins took his seat at his desk and waved her over before she could leave. He pulled his glasses off his face and wiped them with a special soft cleaning rag designed to not scratch the lenses before putting them back on and smiled at her folding his hands.

"Maybe. Why do I get the feeling I'm going to regret saying yes?"

She smirked and joked with him in a dry tone and he chuckled at her. They had a comfortable joking familiarity between them and it often was much easier for her to be herself around him than any other teacher in the entire school.

She stood in front of his desk holding her book bag and smiling softly to him allowing him to explain.

"Well, Mrs Hawkins, I truly hope you will say yes. I have a request I must ask of you. It's extremely important and I wouldn't come to you personally above all others if it wasn't. I trust you out of all my other students for this task. I know you will be more than capable and willing to help when another pupil needs aid in their studies. I have a student that is somewhat behind in their classwork and, well... I shouldn't be saying this as I could get in trouble but..."

"You can trust me, I won't repeat it, Mr Watkins." She offered and he looked nervous at first but beamed up at her trusting her fully not to.

"Well, one of your fellow classmates is not thriving in this class and has a failing grade. I need you to perhaps help them study and learn the reading material better so they can improve their grade to a passing one and ace more tests. The past few test scores were less than desirable and that's putting it mildly. It is most imperative for them to do better. If they continue to fail, they may walk with their class and get their diploma but they won't have a high enough grade point average to keep their full athletic scholarship and go on to college. Would you be interested in helping them study. Maybe even for some extra credit?"

Mandy felt bad for whoever it was that was so far behind. She noted how kind and considerate it was of Mr Watkins to care and take

interest in all his students, especially ones that were at risk of being left behind. Still, in all his generosity she felt the familiar sting of favoritism over the academically challenged sports oriented students versus the people who actually tried hard to earn their way into college with their intellect actually doing their class work and studying for their tests. Nevertheless she nodded and agreed.

"Sure, Mr Watkins, I would be happy to help. Just let me know who it is and I can give them my number to set up a study date."

His face swelled with pride at her and that she was more than happy to help another student in need. They were now on the acts and scenes of Romeo's exile from the city by the prince and reading about the desperation between both he and Juliet to see one another again in secret to run away together forsaking both their houses. It was a very difficult portion of the story for most to understand just what really happened to cause their bittersweet ending and the last meeting that lead to their ultimate tragedy.

"Oh, wonderful! Well he mentioned to me that you already knew each other and that he has your number and would call. I will happily let him know you agreed. Expect a call from Mr Hargrove over the weekend. I told him you were top of the class and he is in capable hands."

Her throat went dry and she began to shift uncomfortably on the spot.

"Mr Watkins... I don't think that's a good idea. I want to help but... I can't tutor Billy Hargrove."

He had been looking over another students paper while talking to her and suddenly looked back up at her surprised she was changing her mind.

"Is everything alright? He spoke very highly of you so I assumed you were close friends and there would be no issues."

She sighed and closed her eyes. Mandy felt bad for agreeing and getting his hopes up and now she felt like she was letting him down by denying his request.

"Well we are... were... kind of. Maybe. I don't know. I mean we were but then we had a few issues and we're not really on speaking terms too much right now."

What could she say? Mr Watkins was looking at her with such disappointment. She felt horrible for backing out of it after she already said she would. That was before she knew it was Billy he spoke of. Why was Billy failing? He knew this stuff. She had told him a lot about Romeo and Juliet and they had even watched the film together! That very night she had explained things to him better it should have been enough to help prepare him for most of the classwork and tests. Apparently he let it slide and didn't use any of it to do the work.

Maybe he truly just did not care about his grades even though she knew he was smart enough to pass. She knew he could do great if he just applied himself a little more. So why was he holding himself back if he could pick it up so well and easily ace it? Was it laziness? Fear of actually doing well and going somewhere after high school? Test anxiety? The problems he suffered at home with Neil making it hard for him to focus? There had to be something going on here. Something he was not telling or showing her.

"Mandy, I'm beside myself. We both talked you up and knew it would be a great match. I simply don't know what to say. Are you sure you can't work things out between you two and that you won't reconsider? He spoke very highly of you when I told him you would be the best one to tutor him this weekend."

She blinked. Billy? Speak highly of her? All he did was tease her and point out her flaws or flirt with her insatiably. What would he say highly of her unless it was hot air to get Mr Watkins on board for this?

"He did? What... what did he say?" She asked out of sheer morbid curiosity almost half knowing what to expect but at the same time she felt almost flattered. Her heart was thudding in her chest. Why was it racing so fast?

"Well, simply that he knew how intelligent you were and how well you knew the infamous love story with a passion unmatched by

anyone he's ever known. He told me he trusted you would be the perfect study partner and that he would be honored to work beside you if you would agree to study with him on Saturday."

"He did... did he?" She narrowed her eyes detecting his familiar way of speaking to someone when there was something he wanted. Always a catch and a motive behind his sweet honey words. Being so sweet he could give someone a tooth ache just listening to him. So now Billy was buttering up their English teacher and using him to get some time with her? She wouldn't be surprised if he had been the one to approach Mr Watkins first and set this all up. She wouldn't put it past him at all.

"Yes. He seems really fond of you, Mandy. He was so distraught over his bad grades and angry at himself for letting them slip so bad. He asked me if I knew anyone that could help. So I thought of you. It would mean a lot to me if you would do this for Mr Hargrove. Since you have had top marks in my class. You're simply amazing in English and you know the Shakespearean plays and the language all too well. Billy could really use a tutor like herself in his academic life. "

Mr Watkins smiled. He was innocent in this although he was flattering her trying to get her to accept and say yes. He had no idea Billy had set this up using him as the middle man.

"Distraught over his grades. Oh, I bet he was. Thank you, Mr Watkins, I'm honored you thought of me above all others and for your compliments. But Billy is...well, Billy... well it's hard to explain. See, we don't really get along and he can be... difficult. Are you sure there isn't anyone else that could help him... besides me?"

Mr Watkins sat for a moment thinking on this. He simply had no idea just how hard Mandy had been working to avoid Billy... or why. All he knew was that he sat behind her and was failing. That he needed someone to tutor him. That Mandy was the best and brightest.

"Not really, Mandy. But even if there were, I couldn't pick anyone more qualified than you. Won't you simply try just for academia's sake? I'm sure Mr Hargrove would be more than reasonable to set aside whatever it is you two are going through for this to work out.



He sounded absolutely sincere."

She frowned at that. Another one wrapped around Billy's manipulative finger.

He begged her a few more times to reconsider as she stammered and tried to think of reasons to get out of it but couldn't and didn't know what to say. Her number one reason was simply that she didn't want to be in the same room as Hargrove for longer than necessary, especially if they were alone. She didn't go into the details of their argument or their sordid run ins with one another, but deep down she knew it would be awkward between them after their last heated exchange. Unless he planned on trying to get in her good graces and flirting her up again.

Eventually Mr Watkins convinced her to at least try. Since he was one of her favorite teachers always kind to her and so proud of her she finally gave in. Maybe it was because Mr Watkins had been a very good teacher to her the past three years and she felt she owed it to him to help Billy on his behalf.

"Alright. I will try. I already said I would and it just wouldn't be right of me to go back on my word. I will do my best, Mr Watkins."

"Good! I'm so glad to hear it. I'm sure Billy will benefit much from you and your vast knowledge of Shakespear. Just do your best and may I suggest flash cards and quizzing one another? If you have any trouble, just come to me and let me know, alright? You're one of the great ones, Mrs Hawkins. Thank you kindly."

He smiled and thanked her going back to his paperwork on his desk and she nodded exiting his classroom and wandered the hall slowly while thinking on everything.

Regrettably, he told her he shouldn't be discussing another students grades with her as it was private and highly against school policy. But for sake of argument to prove his point of Billy's need, he had to because he wasn't doing so well and had failed his last few tests barely turning in any of the classwork. He wanted to see improvement in his test scores and for him to bring his grade up so he would be able to have a chance at a future even if that only relied

on his athletic abilities to do it.

He had mentioned to her that Billy had to keep his grade point average up to a certain percentage and needed to pass this class, or he would be have trouble with his athletic scholarship and getting in to a decent college.

Clearly he supported Billy as a valuable lead player as well as supported the Hawkins High team and their successful games against other teams. Something they couldn't have done without him as one of their star athlete. It was obvious Mr Watkins followed Billy's games and idolized him for his skills on the court. She guessed he could see how that could help him in life if he made it big in the world of sports. Higher learning didn't seem to be his calling as much as an athletic one.

She headed to her next class in slight agony and disappointment in having to waste a weekend she could have spent with her friends tutoring Billy instead. All the back and forth between them had really tested her when it came to being around him and she had no idea how she was going to handle this.

At the same time she kind of wanted to push him to learn. She wanted him to earn his grades and earn his scholarship to go to college. It just wasn't right that he seemed to skate by being the favorite simply for having an athletic body adored by the coach, the team, and practically the entire student body and faculty.

If she were honest with herself, she didn't really know she didn't try harder to back out. She could have said no and nothing bad would have come of it for her. Except perhaps her own guilt eating at her. Guilt over knowing she owed him for making Tommy leave her the hell alone and stop harassing her. She supposed she owed him that much for doing that for her. Even after their breakoff it was noticeable that he was still keeping him away from her as Tommy hadn't bothered her in a long time. He still stared her down but never approached or said anything to her.

Maybe it was because she could still remember how fun it had been to watch the classic movie version with him when comfortable on her living room couch and how much fun they had together that night

discussing Romeo and Juliet. Well, until he ruined it by kissing her and making her feel strange things for him. Things that had confused her world more than she had ever let him know.

She decided in the long run she would agree to this simply because she was raised right by her parents fully knowing it was the right thing to do to help another person succeed out of the goodness of her own heart if they needed her help and she could give it. Not because she actually wanted to see him again or anything like that.

They had practically been awkward with one another at school ever since their spat in the library. Thank goodness Mrs Bannister hadn't been there that day letting her have run of the place and that it happened behind a closed locked door in the sound proof study room. He had pushed her buttons far too many times and she was at the breaking point with him not really wanting to let him back in to her personal life.

But maybe, just maybe, Billy could change if he had someone to point him in the right direction in both his studies while possibly giving him some normal human interaction for once. He tried to switch off and hide inside himself but she could see that was a cover to protect himself. From what exactly? She wished she knew but he was a locked book to her taboo and forbidden to read.

The drunken honest side of him she saw at the pool party showed her there was more to him beneath the hardened cold surface that he presented to people. The night he had cared for her solidified that as he could have left her there helpless at Tina's. Sure, he had rough edges on the outside, but maybe it was just a defense mechanism he had learned over time due to some sort of painful past he kept hidden from everyone, including her, as much as he could.

Sometimes she saw it in his eyes. Saw his pain and the lost look in his eyes when his guard was down and he was being close to her. She knew his gentle softer side and figured it maybe it would be worth the time and effort to try and help that grow and become a predominant trait in his personality.

There were a lot of maybes. A part of her was dying to find out which one, if not all, were possibly correct.

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Friday came and went with his typical annoying game of trying to get her attention as he sat at his desk whispering from behind her. He even dared to tug on her hair slightly but he was being gentle in how he talked to her, most likely still worried she hated him because of their fight and feeling guilty.

Even when being decent to her, what was considered decent for him anyway, he was seriously testing her resolve to keep her word to Mr Watkins. When she ignored him each time he did it, it would make him mildly upset and he would go quiet over being prevented from his apparent favorite passtime, which was making her absolutely aware of his existence in his seat behind her. If she wasn't so cross with him she might even find it cute or endearing but he needed to learn he didn't own her.

Classes went by in a blur as she looked forward to just going home. A part of her felt sad about having to do this to him in order to teach him not to be so territorial over her. She never accepted his claim but he acted like she did and was his girl.

When lunchtime came, she told her friend Nikki about their study date for Saturday, very much against her will as Nikki could tend to overreact, and her friend had practically screamed with excitement in the cafeteria over it. She had to literally reach across the table and cup Nikki's mouth so she would keep a lid on it. Once she calmed down she asked her what she was going to wear to 'impress him' or 'win his heart'.

"Mandy, this is great! Now you two can patch things up and see if it will lead to something between you two! Oh, I'm so excited for you both. I always said you would make a cute couple! You are a great match for him. He's the beast and your the Belle to tame him! His wild side mixed with your shy softness is super cute! Did he ask you to help him or did you approach him and offer? Details, details! Spill it! I just have to-mmmffff!"

Nikki went wide eyed as she cut her off before she could even continue and Mandy gave her a glare placing her finger to her own lips signaling her to tone it down and whisper. Nikki nodded but

stuck her tongue out to lick Mandy's hand making her pull it back releasing her face and giggling at her.

"Gross, Nikki. Calvin does that to me. How old are you again?" She wiped her saliva coated hand on her napkin next to her food tray.

Nikki grinned but was whispering now, still in a somewhat loud whisper but she was trying, while doing her best to contain herself as she ate her lunch in the cafeteria with Mandy. She would only pause to eat a bite and drink something quickly and then go right back to chattering on. Did she ever draw breath? How did this friend's face not turn blue when talking so fast and so much?

"Breathe, Nikki. I'll explain but please calm down." Mandy couldn't help but giggle at her even if it was making her feel outed about her personal life while looking around the cafeteria in a paranoid fashion.

Mandy was just thankful that Tucker and Alex were at the computer lab together going over one of his projects because she didn't want him to overhear any of this. They had just got their friendship back to a semi decent state and she knew it would just upset him again or make him sad.

Mandy rolled her eyes at her hyper delusional friend saying they would be a great couple together. For some reason Nikki still had the insane idea in her head that they belonged together as if Mandy could tame his wild ways and make him settle down with her.

She acted as if they were soulmates destined to be together forever but that was so far from reality Mandy didn't have the heart to list off all the reasons why to Nikki. She was just as naive as all the other girls were about Hargrove and it sort of saddened Mandy. She herself held no delusions about this and had finally convinced herself she didn't want him in that way.

"So what are you going to wear? Something super smexy I hope to help you steal his heart right out of his chest? Ohh, I have a few things you could borrow if you want. Or maybe we could go to Starcourt today after school and get you something. Compliments of my mother's credit card, of course. She won't care she will just think she bought it for herself and forget. Haha!"

"I don't want his heart, Nikki, if he even has one. I'm doing this as a one time favor for his grades and for Mr Watkins, that's all. So I will just wear my usual clothes when I go to see him. He hates when I cover up so I'd wear everything I own in my closet just to make him keep his eyes to himself."

Nikki frowned and slumped in her seat a little. Just when she thought her friend was making progress in showing off a little more skin and being more openly confident with an easygoing flow. Now she was going to backtrack that progress and jam it all up. When she gave her that look Mandy got slightly more defensive.

"I don't need to dress up special for him or do anything that might get his wires crossed about why I am there, Nikki. We've been over this, I'm not interested in him. That is exactly why we are the way we are right now, if you'll recall I stood up to him to make him stop. Maybe I thought I was interested once but I see now it was a mistake to even think the thought. Besides, I'm already doing enough for him by even going over there to help him pass this class and test and that should be enough for him to be grateful for."

Nikki frowned slightly while stabbing at her food with her fork but tried to not show her change in mood too much. She most likely wanted to plan a shopping trip with Mandy before the appointed study time and it must have burst her bubble. It was like Nikki was chairman of the 'Billy and Mandy Together Forever Fanclub' or something.

They had this conversation so many times but Nikki refused to accept that Mandy was not the one for Billy or vice versa. Still, she wasn't giving up any time soon on it. She perked up again and tried once more to talk her version of reason and sense into her friend.

"Girl, seriously? Think about this for a moment. Let's recap, okay? I mean, really. You guys kissed after cuddling together. He flirts with you constantly, more than I've seen him flirt with any other girl, even Tina."

Mandy went wide eyed shushing her friend trying to get her to keep it down. She should have never confided in her about that first kiss with him that night and she went horribly red in the face hiding in

her arms on the table.

"You drove him and his car home and he didn't murder you over it and he even thanked you for it. That car is expensive and there's no way he would be cool with something like that! He was all over you at Steve's pool party..."

"He was drunk, Nikki..." Mandy interrupted but her friend paid it no mind and kept going.

"Drunk or not, he was honest with you clearly showing his feelings for you. He gave you sheep eyes long before that at the community pool, where he wasn't drunk might I add. He forsook Tina, and all other girls, backing off of her when he saw it was upsetting you. Honestly, if you didn't like him why would you care about him and Tina?"

"I don't." She protested muffled by her arms covering her face and shaking her head.

"You do. You know you do. Oh, and let's not forget that at the Halloween party he took care of you and brought you home safe and sound. How many guys do you know would do that for a drunk girl, hmmm? And without taking advantage being a gentleman?"

Mandy was groaning in her arms now hoping the whole cafeteria wasn't listening to this.

"It's so obvious he is into you and has it bad for you. Even bad enough to stay for a movie night with you, your whole family included, and you told me he liked your little brother. Now you are sitting here telling me that YOU are angry about spending the evening with the hottest guy in school for a study session at his place who has taken an actual liking to you?"

Nikki was grinning and poking Mandy's head while she hid her face.

"He has it bad for me... because he wants to sleep with me." Mandy groaned out still angry at this and having absolutely no idea why anymore. She hated being a virgin and just wanted it done and over with already.

"Well, why not let him? He's hot and he's sweet on you. He's good in bed from what I hear..."

"Because I dunno, maybe, I'm not ready for that with any guy, let alone someone like Hargrove."

"Oh, Mandy, whatever am I going to do with you? I keep trying to mold you and teach you but you keep fighting me on everything. Why must you make my life's goal so hard to achieve? I live for helping you blossom, babygirl."

Mandy sighed and Nikki tried a different approach.

"Do you have any idea how many girls wished to be in your shoes right now?!" She squealed then apologized when Mandy shot her a look being a little quieter.

"Then why can't those other girls on campus go and tutor him? Let THEM sleep with him. I would gladly give this over to anyone else in a heartbeat."

She lifted her head to look into Nikki's eyes and saw that she truly meant well but just didn't understand.

"Well, it's going to be you, Mandy. It has to be. I truly feel you are good for him, regardless of the shit going around school about him. People talk, it's how this whole high school thing works. I don't know why I feel that. Just call it a hunch."

Mandy snorted at that. But Nikki beamed as if she was a fortune teller looking into a crystal ball and telling her the future she saw for the two of them.

"Also, I would just like to die happy as your self appointed Godmother in knowing I helped you hook up with at least ONE guy and have the most amazing experience you will ever have. Your first love, your first date, and your first time with a guy that every girl should have while young and vibrant and still beautiful. You're on a roll! You already got the first kiss down. Why stop there?"

She laughed softly at how Mandy was hiding her face from her blushing horribly. She was absolutely embarrassed and felt as if the



entire cafeteria was looking at her and listening in now.

"I think I've had enough firsts with him to last me a life time. Trust me on that."

Nikki gave her a knowing look and playfully made soft kissy faces at her then kissing her own hand imitating her first kiss with Billy Hargrove that night.

"You promised you wouldn't tease me over him anymore. God, I really should not have told you about that night or anything to do with what we did."

Mandy moaned and hid her face again forsaking her tray of food while thumping her forehead against the hard cafeteria table. Hard. Several times. Nikki frowned.

"You're right. I'm sorry, love. I just think it's sweet is all and it's too obvious that he would prefer you than dating Tina or all the other girls he's driving around with. I guess I should be the one reading your special little novels since I'm the hopeless romantic here. You seem to have given up on it."

Her friend laughed gently and took a bite of her macaroni salad allowing Mandy time to recover her thoughts before speaking again.

In a way, Nikki was right. She had spent her whole life looking for true love and romantic feelings for another. Even sensual and sexual ones but she wanted the love and devotion that would come with it. She spent far too many nights reading about it and never experiencing or living it. She spent many nights pining for it.

She was getting older and her hormones were on overdrive despite never going there with a guy. She had told herself if she ever felt anything special inside for a boy she would try and see where it lead to and go further than she had ever dared. So why not Billy? She did feel things for him. He did do things to her that made her want him in a strange way.

Why was she holding back from him? Was it only because of his bad reputation? He had never really done anything to hurt her, not

intentionally or with intent to harm her, even when getting personal with her. He had perved on her sure, but he had shown restraint when she had asked him or forced him to back off.

Mandy thought of that gentle kiss he had given her in front of her house that night for the hundredth time over now. It was still burning on her lips sometimes when he would look at her from far in passing. His blue eyes locking with hers as if beaming it into her head and reminding her of how it felt to feel his lips on hers. She couldn't deny she wanted to feel that again with him. And even more...

"Beauty fades with time and time waits for no one, Mandy. So what are you waiting for, darlin'? You aren't getting any younger with each passing day, no offense, and you might as well live it up while you can while you are young and beautiful. Trust me, you could do worse than Billy Hargrove for a first time."

Jesus, did Nikki have telepathic powers? She just had this way of knowing her thoughts and then commenting on them out loud. Still, Mandy instantly thought of Tommy when she said that and couldn't deny she was right. There were worse fates out there. Worse perils from far worse people out there. Billy was a tame pussycat in his chase of her compared to what Tommy had done to her.

Nikki watched her face as she noticed she was thinking hard what she said. She had meant well and not to be insulting to her or pushy. According to her she was just stating the facts. They had known each other long enough to know she was simply caring about her. Looking out for her in her own warped sort of way.

Mandy still denied most of it as Nikki playfully dug into her and she resolved she was still going to be sticking to her guns on this. Hot guy or not, kiss or no kiss that had shaken her world, she didn't need to impress him as if she was his romantic interest or conquest. It was just a study date and that's all it would be. She would make sure of that and would also make sure he knew that too.

Deciding to just go as herself, dweeby dorky all natural Mandy Hawkins whether he liked it or not, she wouldn't give him the satisfaction of seeing her all gussied up over him because that would make him think she wanted him still. She had been wearing plenty of

new and nicer clothing that she was positive he had been getting an eyeful of in class but now she didn't feel as generous. Their argument was still fresh and burning in her mind and she was still a little sore about it. She didn't want to give him anything. The bonus points were in making him suffer her unattractive presence while in her mousey drab clothing looking as plain boring as she could for him. It was fair considering all the times he made her suffer his ultra sexy strutting presence in school.

It still bothered her why she was doing this. She thought about it for half the day but still couldn't come up with a solid reason. She could have said no and wiped her hands clean of it. She should have but a part of her felt she owed it to Billy because of all he had done for her by keeping Tommy from humiliating and stalking her. That miserable jerk had done it to her for years and now thanks to Billy he had finally left her alone. He had even managed to get Carol to stop talking about her behind her back with the popular clique and it was a nice break from being tormented each day.

A part of it was most likely because there were aspects of Billy that excited her and invoked intense feelings of fascination within her. Perhaps the old adage was true. Good girls liked bad boys. Psychologically of course, this was because of the possible danger they represented or the chance of getting into trouble with them that gave good girls such a rush. She couldn't deny the feeling her stomach got whenever he was near or very close to her. It was a rush but it frightened her. Mandy wouldn't call herself a good girl, but she was not like other girls who were into risque things like one night stands and hookups or just being sexually active period. She liked her books and her privacy despite becoming a little more open and adventurous since the few parties she had been to now. She still preferred keeping mostly to herself when not hanging out with her friends. And she definitely still liked avoiding Billy and Tommy as well for good measure.

So why was the fascination for him still raging within her like a wild fire that could not be put out and contained? It had slowly been building up since their first sighting of each other when he had moved in across the street from her. How he had leaned against his car watching her intently even from day one. And it had grown even

stronger when he first approached her in the hallway at her locker. She could not forget the feel of his hands traveling along her body at the party. Or how his lips had kissed her soft skin setting a trail of passionate flames along it burning her up even in the cold pool water at Steve's house.

Perhaps she just had to see for herself to find out and actually be truly alone with him for once. Was there more underneath all his bad attitude and disruptive behavior or was he truly what he presented himself to be? Was she wrong about him or just seeing something that wasn't really there?

"Please don't tell anyone though, Nikki. Don't tell our friends either. They would never let me live this down! You cannot tell Tucker no matter what because he would hate me again and we just finally solved everything. So he definitely cannot know about this. Ever. Please don't tell them."

When she said this her friend gave a sympathetic sad smile mixed with a serious expression that meant she would take it to her grave. She nodded to her and held out her pinky. Again she swore the pinky promise with undying loyalty.

It was just then that Tucker and Alex came up and sat with them laughing and holding their lunch trays.

"Tell who what? Us? Now, now, ladies, if we're going to be friends and play nice, secrets must be shared." Tucker sat next to Mandy and smiled winking at her. She noticed the way he looked at her still. Even now he had a deep love for her but he was being more in control of it. For both of their sakes.

His caring for her was another reason she didn't want him to know about her going to Billy's on Saturday. He was finally smiling at her again and talking to her as if they had never had their fight. He was healing and on the mend and she didn't want to tear the old wound and make it bleed again.

"Oh, nothing! The secret is surely in these apples. God, is it me or are these apples getting even better with each batch they order for the caf?"

Mandy said biting into her apple from her lunch tray pretending to take an interest in it quickly changing the subject. Tucker sniffed his apple and then bit into it.

"They... taste the same to me. Why? Are you feeling okay?"

He looked at her funny and she just shrugged as she kept biting into it insisting it was extremely tasty rolling her eyes as she ate it.

Alex wouldn't drop it. He was always the more curious of the group and very keen to their nonsense.

"So, what were you two talking about just now? Something you can't tell who?"

He asked while picking up his pizza slice and eyeing them knowingly. It would seem the boys forsook the home made sack lunches and finally decided to use their cafeteria food tickets.

"Oh, nothing. Just girl talk, you know. Stupid stuff. Not for guys ears. Lady body business."

Nikki said shrugging and playing it off coolly while grossing them out effectively covering it up. Tucker dropped the apple into his tray at that one and stopped eating.

"Ew. Yeah we don't wanna know." Mandy laughed. Good save, Nikki.

Alex teased shoving Nikki in response while still eating his pizza, unfazed in the slightest, his beautiful Asian eyes lighting up as he smiled. Nikki shoved him back and they started a mini food fight just between them for a few minutes.

They ate their lunch together joking around and talking about the current horror movies playing in theatres and trying to organize a group outing between the four of them to see one of them. They wanted to see it in Starcourt hoping the new cinema would be done being constructed by then and not wanting to go to the Hawk Theatre.

Once the bell rang, Mandy made her way to her next class saying goodbye to her friends. The rest of the day went off without a hitch,

oddly even without Billy coming to her, and as soon as P.E. class was over with she met up with Nikki, Tucker, and Alex in the lot for all of them to catch a ride home in her car.

When she was walking out laughing with them headed to Nikki's vehicle, she saw Billy leaning against his Camaro with his loyal followers. Mandy ignored him as best as she could while he watched her. He was standing around smoking with Tommy and Carol, most likely waiting on Max to skate over before he would be taking off to go home. He was eyeing her as she was talking to her friends but she looked away only seeing his attention to her out of the corner of her eyes while trying to pretend he didn't exist. To look at him would just cause her to dwell and be reminded of what was coming tomorrow. She didn't want to so she kept her eyes down as they all got into Nikki's car to drive off.

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Carol and Tommy noticed Billy watching her from afar but not approaching like he usually did. They also had been seeing that she no longer got into his car and that she hadn't almost all week long. They both looked at him as if to ask Billy just what was going on.

In Tommy's mind, either he was hitting that or he wasn't. Either they were dating and she was his girl and property as he claimed, or she was fair game for his taking. Carol didn't care either way so long as she could stand near Billy to flirt with him lightly and covertly every chance she got. Billy never gave her the time of day like he did to Tina and Mandy and it often burned her up over it but she kept on trying.

"What's with you and Hawkins? Is that claim you kicked my ass over still in effect or not? Cuz I will be pretty pissed if I find out you beat me down for nothing. It sure as hell don't look like you two are involved. Not even as fuck buddies."

Tommy glared at Billy but watched his tone when he snapped a feral look in his direction warning him to shut his mouth.

"You just do as I said and keep away from her. It's my business. I don't need to justify or explain my sex life to you. Mandy and I are

fine we just don't like to put on a show of it in school, ya get me? She prefers privacy and one on one when being intimate with me and I'm going to let her have that if she wants it."

"If I didn't know any better, I'd say you truly were going soft over her. Either that or your lying to me. Which is it?"

Tommy said grinning while smoking a cigarette. Carol looked nervous between the two of them not wanting them to get into another scuffle with one another. Last time was brutal and she had personally tended to Tommy's wounds at his house having a long talk with him about how he should stop sassing Billy and just do as he is told.

"Alright, Tommy, that's enough. Pipe down. Or didn't you learn your lesson the first time Billy beat your ass and you wound up getting detention? You're lucky you didn't get expelled, idiot."

She smacked her gum and gave Billy a look that clearly showed she would side with him any day even over Tommy. Her ex growled at this but he had to agree. He didn't want to have to lick more wounds inflicted by Hargrove or spend another weekend in the library for detention with Mrs Bannister, as strict and mean as she was. For an old lady she was terrifying when she had to be.

"Whatever. I'll respect it for now. A deal's a deal after all. But if she ever dumps you or you toss her aside, I'm not holding back and I'll make my move."

"That won't happen so just stay away. The bet is still in effect as is my taking her off the table. She's still mine and I'm not changing my mind on that anytime soon. I let her have some of her freedoms is all. If she wants to ride with her friends, I can pick her up later."

The lie was smooth. He knew she had been avoiding him again and was not interested but he had to keep Tommy believing she was.

"You however, getting up in that? That's laughable. You're dreaming and wasting your time if you think she would come to you. You wouldn't get very far, without force, considering what you did in the first place that made me step in. And if I ever catch wind of you using

pills or trying to force things again, I'll send you six feet under instead of giving you a fat bleeding lip. Are we clear on that?"

Billy looked pissed while taking a few steps towards Tommy which made him back up a bit. There was fear in his eyes. A Recognition that it was Billy now who called all the shots.

"Yeah. I got it. It won't happen again." Tommy had no smile on his face and his brown eyes were intense and serious as Billy looked into them searching for compliance. Finding it there he was satisfied, even while Carol tried to step in between them.

"Good." Billy turned his back to him unafraid. He took his cigarette between his fingers rolling it slightly and absentmindedly then brought it back to his lips.

"You know, if you wanted Mandy so badly... maybe you should have been smarter and more smooth about approaching her. You catch more flies with honey than you do with vinegar, Tommy. Isn't that right, Carol?"

Billy grinned flashing his nice teeth and then made an innocent charming expression to drive home his point when Carol looked at him nodding and smiling back at him. Tommy looked between both of them somewhat scowling but then gave his usual cocky joker's smile.

"That's real cute. Read that off a fortune cookie, did ya?" He smirked at him and Billy just shrugged. He knew his game was strong and airtight. He also knew Mandy still wanted him and he would have her when she was ready to let him back in.

"Well, some guys got it. Some guys don't. And you just don't got it, Tommyboy."

Tommy cringed at how he said his name while Carol laughed softly still chewing her gum and popping it. She shut her mouth when he looked at her glaring a bit.

Billy put out his cigarette when he saw Max approaching them. He walked off without saying goodbye to either of them and was in too



good a mood at having successfully set up the study date night with Mandy to even rumble with Tommy or even to pester Max.

The entire drive home was quiet between them and she didn't prod or ask why. Billy didn't even get on her for being a few minutes late so she guessed he must be in a good mood and perhaps was seeing their neighbor Mandy again. She had noticed she wasn't around as much in the car for rides home with them like before and it had made her sad not to be able to visit with her. But perhaps that would change and she would come back now, since he seemed to be really happy. It usually only happened when he was on good speaking terms with Mandy and they were spending time together.

Max smiled knowingly in the seat but turned it out towards the passenger side window so he wouldn't notice that she was onto both of them. It was undeniably clear he had feelings for Mandy, his sleep talk still ongoing, and loved being around her which put him in a much more copasetic mood that all in their household could handle. It meant less fights with Neil, less antagonizing from him to herself personally, and less of him driving like a psychopath blaring his God awful loud music or attempting to play chicken with her friends on their bikes as they rode home.

It suited her just fine and she liked when Billy was like this so she approved of Mandy and wanted her to stay in her brother's life as long as possible. Either she would be coming over tonight while she went to the movies with Neil and her mom, or he would be visiting her over at her place. As long as they were hanging out and he was being chill, Max was happy for everyone including herself.

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Saturday came around quickly much to Mandy's dismay. She dreaded the hours passing, time ticking by relentlessly, getting closer to when she would have to go to Billy's house. She was not sure she was ready to face him just yet and be within such close proximity of him for so long a time period. Things were still off between them and she would no doubt be extremely nervous.

To ensure she would show up, Billy had called her mother around noon explaining to her about Mr Watkins setting up the study date

and that it would be at his house in the afternoon time. Her mother was baking cookies at the time with Calvin and had relayed the message telling her it was sweet of her to offer to help him with his schoolwork.

This reminder of her good deed she would suffer to fulfill made her choke back the negative things she wanted to say about him to possibly get her mother to call the whole thing off. Maybe she could fake being sick! Mandy hoped maybe her mother could say she was feeling under the weather or something and could get her out of it if she faked it really well. She thought about pretending to be ill but then she remembered Mr Watkins and her promise to him to help Billy and grumbled. There really just was no way out of this.

Before her mother could ask questions about why she and Billy didn't seem to spend much time together anymore she ran upstairs to get dressed hiding in her room to pass the time before she would be forced to see him. She didn't want to explain the nature of their fight to Katherine because it was personal and between the two of them alone.

Before the appointed study date, she had to help her mom do a bit of shopping and running errands with her. This thankfully would buy her more time before she would have to go to his house. Of all the bad things she could have signed herself up for foolishly, having to tutor Billy at his place would have to be the messed up cherry and icing on top of the entire misery cake. An end to her otherwise perfect day by having to tolerate him up close and personal during their study.

He still made her skin crawl sometimes in an unpleasant way which oddly enough made her realize there was a pleasant way he did it to her as well. He scared her with how bad he wanted her but he also thrilled her at the same time with his overprotectiveness of her against Tommy and anyone else who tried to approach her.

His angry and intense nature was especially obvious when she saw how upset he could get with people at school who didn't bow and scrape to him or treat him like the King of Hawkins, his official title now earned at Tina's still sticking. He would be quiet one moment and then get set off so easy by people at other times, mostly teachers

and staff or boys that looked at him wrong trying to pick a fight. She heard about him roughing up other guys in school getting into fights with them whether he started them or not. Aside from his addiction to the adrenaline rush of scrapping, there was his sexual legacy as well that got around the school fast enough since day one.

The most she had heard from the girls of the school were usually one or a combination of the following about him: "Hot. Skilled in bed. A Horndog. Heartbreaker. A one night stand kind of guy. Skirtchaser. A cherry hound."

Not that she needed to hear any of this from the rumors about him, she already knew how he liked to play and ran his game. He had shown her most of this by his chasing after her relentlessly and their interactions together thus far.

The girls also never talked about it like it was a bad thing or that they hated him for it, but rather that it excited them as if they liked it. She saw and heard a few girls crying over him on campus, sure, but then they would eventually bounce back and go have rebounds to try and get him out of their heads and forget. It often failed to work out for them but she no longer saw them crying at least. He was notorious for this, a heartbreaker indeed.

Another reason she did not like his lavish unwavering attentions on her or the idea of being with him at his place for any reason, even if just studying, and she hoped they wouldn't be alone together there.

She recalled how he made her feel in the water at Steve's pool party. How dangerously close he had been to slipping his hands inside of her bikini. How he had pressed her against the pool wall just like he did her locker on his first day there. It made her shiver to think about it but it also set off a strange squirming in her gut that made her feel weird yet good inside.

Getting her outfit picked out for the day after her shower she put her hair in long pigtails, wore her glasses, and dressed in as many layers as she could. Her usual nerdy style of dress to be as offputting for Billy as she could. After showering, dressing, and fixing her hair she sat at her vanity and got a wickedly cruel yet effective idea. She sprayed the Vanilla and Warm Honey body spray on herself that

Nikki had gifted to her in the Starcourt Mall. A light spray on her wrists, and to deter him from putting his lips there, she applied it moderately on her neck and shoulders and a little bit on her ears too. If he put his mouth and tongue there he would get a strong taste of her body spray and she laughed at how that would make him recoil. It was the simple and effective things in life she loved so much.

As soon as she had finished getting ready she heard her mother call her downstairs so they could go run the errands. Gathering her bookbag and packing up all her notes from English class as well as the textbooks they would need she walked down the stairs and out the door following her mom to the stationwagon. Her father chose to stay home and watch Calvin while they went out to get groceries, supplies, and other much needed things for the house.

After they stopped by quickly to pay a few bills. With each stop it was getting closer and closer to the appointed time that her mother would drop her off at Billy's house. They did the grocery shopping last so the food wouldn't go bad sitting in the car, although to be honest, it was a cold enough day that they most likely wouldn't.

As they got closer to the house, their tasks completed, she began sweating and worrying over going through with this, even if it was too late to back out now.

She not only feared being alone with Billy, but almost feared not being alone with him even more if Neil was there. The only person that could set her on edge more than Billy Hargrove was capable of was Mr Hargrove, his father.

She adored Max and Susan and had great conversations with them each time she had popped over to visit with them, however briefly, whenever Billy would drag her inside in the living room. A few times she had babysitted for them watching over Max but try as he might, Billy could never get her to go into his bedroom. She would stay glued to the couch and focus everything on Max much to his disappointment. Several times he worked out lifting weights in front of her to show off while blasting his music from his room, the door open, which would sometimes disrupt the movies she put on with Max. They wound up having to relocate to Max's bedroom shutting and locking the door using her T.V. to continue the film.

But when it came to Neil, he didn't really like Mandy being around if he and Billy were home too, because it meant he had to restrain himself from how he would verbally attack and degrade his son around her. Mandy imagined that made him angry to the bone over having to hold back his temper and watch what he said or did.

Since Susan and Max loved having her over whenever she came, he had to bite his tongue and not say a word about it and allow it. She could imagine their want of her being around made him even more fired up over it. Sometimes Billy would give her these looks as if silently thanking her just for being there and she often wanted to question him but then thought it better to leave it alone, whatever it was.

Mandy had noticed Billy seemed more relaxed with her being there. Even if just to stop by and drop off class work, homework, and other assignments he would sometimes miss in passing when he was conspicuously absent from first period. Either he cut or he stayed home all day due to reasons unknown to her. She could only figure since his home life was hectic, he was cutting to get away from it all and chill somewhere to cool down. It may have had something to do with Neil's demanding nature towards his son always trying to control him, but she never had any proof he was the one causing Billy to skip. If it was because of him, Billy was good at hiding it acting like his missing days didn't matter and telling her he cut class simply because he wanted to.

Her stomach flip flopped when they got nearer to her mother dropping her off in front of the Hargrove's as she wondered which would be the worse of the two evils. Being alone with Billy knowing how he felt about her and how he closed in on her? Or being in the house with Neil around making everyone, herself included, uncomfortable and as if she wasn't wanted there?

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Billy had been counting on this meetup for a few weeks now. After their argument things were not the same between them but he hid it from everyone at school. He didn't get to tease her or play around with her anymore and he surprisingly missed that. They never invited each other over anymore not even just to have one of their pointless

chit chats about life and other crap which he also strangely enjoyed. He stayed away from her in school as much as he could handle and she in turn avoided him seeing the other girls he brought around to try and distract himself from her. It wasn't working. None of them were Mandy. None of them got him like she did.

It had been driving him up the wall but he would never admit it nor even try to tell her about how he felt. He had already attempted that once and she had turned him down flat running away from him and forcing him to back off as if he were just like Tommy or even worse. He was hurt and angry but he didn't want to feel any of it. So he switched off for a while, gave her space outside of English class trying to avoid her giving her what he thought she wanted. She wouldn't let him walk by her side, give her rides, or protect her around campus. She wouldn't let him be hers. And he knew he was so fuckin' hers. If only she knew it but he couldn't put it into words for her. He could only show her physically as that was all he knew.

The more time he spent away from her the harder it got to not try and talk to her in first period making him break down and begin his old games with her. Or at least, he was trying. Finally deciding enough was enough of this avoidance game she was playing with him, all denial and no tease, he had approached her English teacher using his poor grades as an excuse to get Mr Watkins to set up a study date between them. He had really worked him making him think he actually gave a damn and made some story up how the coach would bench him off the team if he didn't improve. He knew his coach wouldn't dare but he also knew Watkins followed his games and admired his skills on the court.

As soon as Mr Watkins told him he had spoken with her about it getting her to agree, Billy resolved to call her house the day of and confirm the study date. As he dialed her number sitting in his room all alone, he felt one of two things were going on here between them.

One, Mandy didn't like him anymore. Not one single bit. The fight had done too much damage to whatever it is they had before and she was slipping away from him.

Or two, Mandy was shy about the fight and simply unsure how to approach him anymore. Perhaps feeling they weren't as close as they

were before.

He chose the second option so he made it his call to be the one to set this up so he could see her again and try to find out just what was going on and if she still liked him.

The kiss had been such a horrible tease, he craved more, and she argued with him instead and drove them further apart. If he didn't get her alone with him soon to figure this all out, he was going to lose it again. He was tired of her making him want her and then pushing him away ignoring him completely. He had even gone so far as tossing Tina aside for her and freed himself up so she could have him all to herself, and then this is how she did him?

Either way, being alone with her this evening would be everything he needed. He was becoming like an addict and her the drug with him suffering huge bouts of withdrawals. And on top of that, just to have her all to himself, he was breaking a very important rule in his fathers house to have this day with her.

When the phone line finally picked up from ringing, he recognized the voice of her mother, Katherine. He smiled dripping honey in his voice while telling her about the study plan assignment given by their English teacher for him and her daughter. Katherine was just as sweet back over the phone to him as she was fond of him being in Mandy's life, but every inch a loyal wife she kept it proper. She had told him she would drop her off after having to drive into town to get a few errands done. The time was set for five in the evening that she drop her off and he told her that would be perfect while thanking her politely.

Billy had told Mrs Hawkins over the phone that a meal would be provided for her daughter if she wanted in case she stayed late to help him study but that he would have her back by at least nine to nine thirty in the evening if that was alright with her. He somehow talked her into agreeing to let Mandy stay as late as even ten at night. This made him laugh softly at how easy it was to get on her mother's good side even over the phone with only his voice and his soothing personality. He had a soft, calm, warm, and inviting voice so it wasn't too hard to do with how practiced he was at charming parents. Her dad wasn't won over so easy but he figured Katherine would handle it

and make sure Mandy would be there.

Katherine had liked him and stood up for them and their privacy the night of the movie marathon. She had liked him when he came calling on her daughter for the pool party offering to drive her there and back. And now she liked him for their study date saying how wonderful it was that they were helping each other with school work and grades.

She was a loving mother, a kind and trusting mother, so it wasn't her fault. She was just so convinced by him that he was a simple, wholesome, polite, and good looking all American boy that she had no idea how he thought and felt about her daughter. It sort of made him feel a little guilty because Katherine was very good to him almost like a... no he didn't want to think about that. She was sweet and he admired her. In fact, a part of him respected Mandy more than he would with any other girl due to respecting Katherine as much as he did. Or his self control would have been for shit each time he had his hands and lips on her and she asked him to stop.

After hanging up he realized he had no idea what he would even make for her as he didn't really know the first thing about cooking. Usually Susan did all the major cooking and he would be told by his dad to help prep everything and give her a hand. So with his own work funds from his new job working at the Family Video movie rental store, he went out and got some things he could easily prepare from home if she was hungry. Mostly snack stuffs but not too unhealthy, just simple to make.

He also picked up some candles, incense, and a pack of condoms from the pharmacy since he was practically out of stock by the time the week was over. Tonight he would be prepared for anything. Even if that meant preparing himself for her. He had been ready for her for so long but now he was waiting on her to let him know where they stood. To give him some sort of a sign, anything, to tell him he was still on her mind and if she still wanted him.

He showered and scrubbed himself up really good including using some of the top of the line hair care stuff on his luxurious wet curls. He almost felt like singing in the shower he was so excited to see her as he lathered himself up. He cleaned up his face shaving and



trimming his mustache and making sure he looked great in the bathroom mirror.

He even put his best cologne on, light earthen smells that would mix with the scent of his leather jacket. It was spicy with a gentle hint of cloves and went well with his aftershave. He wore his favorite and most relaxed outfit for her. His shirt was a crisp clean white muscle shirt that would show off his pecks, biceps, and his powerful arms and torso to her knowing how much she loved his body.

Billy spent hours as he even straightened up his room airing it out of all the cigarette smoke and other things like food and his small waste basket of beer cans. He lit the candles and incense letting them permeate the room for another hour or so before putting them out and did a few walk ins into his room to see if even he could notice the difference. It smelled great and he knew she would love it. All he needed now was for her to show up.

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A few hours later, Billy was outside on the porch as he eagerly sat waiting for his "date" to arrive. This was a date to him even if he knew it was merely a study meetup for Mandy. He would take great pleasure in correcting her and making her see it was more than what she was expecting it to be. He was confident he could have her melting in his arms before the night was over.

Each car he heard coming made him turn his head to look only to be disappointed when it wasn't hers. He began to pace at one point and wanted a cigarette but just brushed his teeth so decided against it. After waiting so long being antsy for her to get there he caved in and lit one up. When he heard a noisier familiar car coming down the road and saw her mother's stationwagon finally arrive he grinned widely. His cigarette was almost down to the butt and still in hand and he cursed realizing her parents didn't know he smoked.

Katherine pulled up and stopped close along the curb talking to Mandy who looked slightly irritable and scrunched down into her seat. She was frowning and he knew that couldn't be a good sign. Did she not want to come over and see him? He quickly flicked his cigarette away as fast as he could from where he sat while blowing

his smoke out behind him fast before standing up. He was trying to hide he was a smoker knowing her mom would not like it and it would shatter the illusion that he was a "nice clean boy".

Putting on the charm with his flirtatious features grinning at them both, her mom waved back at him smiling as he gave a saintlike expression that proclaimed he would behave himself innocently with her daughter.

But dressed as he was in a black leather jacket and a muscle shirt showing the parts of his chest and arms the girls all loved to see, complete with his ear piercing, he would seem anything but to a more uptight parent. Billy even caught her mother staring at him a little bit, whether over his choice of style or because she thought he was cute he didn't know, but she maintained her dignity not checking him for long ceasing almost as soon as she had started to.

He noticed the wedding ring, how she proudly wore it, the first time they had met in person at the dinner party she threw them over at their house. He didn't even have to see the ring in order to know she was a good dutiful wife to Rick Hawkins, even when faced with a good looking guy like himself. It was in the way she moved around her husband and always found loving ways to touch him gently and pay attention to him naturally while also caring for their dinner guests. She took her marriage seriously unlike most married women that scoped him out behind their husband's backs each chance they got. He could peg it that easy about her from the first time they had been introduced.

Married women were a little harder to get in the sack. He would flirt with them but never wanted to go further than that as it was too much drama to deal with a jealous husband. He steered clear of those types as much as possible. He'd butter them up and be sweet but never crossed the line. He knew better even without having to picture Rick's rifle in his head and he wanted to survive long enough to ditch Neil, graduate, and blow out of here going back to California. He almost wished he could take Mandy with him but sadly he knew she would never accept. Her life was here along with her family, her childhood, and all her memories.

Mandy's mom looked at him for a moment checking out his choice of

attire from a distance then back to her daughter with the slightest look of concern. Protective mama bear watching out for her cub. He could guess it was because Katherine was seeing him dressed so much more adult like than he usually did the past few times she had seen him. When she caught Billy's heartstopping grin to reassure her, she smiled back at him and waved trying to call him over most likely to say hi to him again and be polite.

Mandy grabbed her hand forcing her to put it down. She shook her head at her mother mouthing something Billy couldn't quite make out or get a lip read on, and slightly looked pissed off as well. She obviously did not want her mom cozying up to a troublemaker like him or making him feel more welcome than she cared for him to be and already had.

Billy noticed her clamming up in the car and it made him want to laugh out loud at her opposition to him. Laugh at how she blatantly showed her dislike of him with little to no trouble even right in front of her confused mother. This would be fun. A real fun game to play with her tonight.

He smirked when he noticed Mrs Hawkins regardless had given her approval despite her daughter's attempts to hide it from him. It was easy for him to win the moms over. One look at him and they melted as much as their daughters did.

Mandy repeatedly tried to get her mom to stop talking and asking questions so she could get out of the car and get this day over with.

He gave an innocent smile and waved to them both ignoring Mandy's behavior while jogging down the driveway towards them. He would put on a very big show just because she simply didn't want him to. He even opened up Mandy's passenger side door to let her out, much to Katherine's approval. He was so good at putting on the act of wholesomeness to any scrutinizing eye that beheld him, especially that of parents. The only one it would never work on was Mandy's old man or his own. He was glad Neil was not home tonight. None of them were. They often took off to have family nights without him as if he were trash and not part of it.

Mandy grumbled but was forced to accept his polite gesture and step

out of the car saying thank you to him for opening her door. She had to keep reminding herself she was doing this for Mr Watkins, to be a good person, and that she was simply helping someone in need. Even if he was a first class grade A jerk, she'd rather he get an A in English class instead and not slack off anymore. It simply gave him ample reason to pester her all the time behind her seat. If he could focus on his work then he could let her be every morning. This was serious and if he wouldn't take it as such she would just go home and explain to Mr Watkins that he refused to cooperate.

Billy kept his gaze respectful while looking at Mandy with Mrs Hawkins there, but once her mother left to park their car into their driveway across the street and walked into their house, he looked her up and down admiring how she tried to once again hide her curves and body from him with her choice of layered geeky attire.

He felt overdressed in comparison but grinned when seeing she had noticed he took care to be gorgeous for her. She was in a somewhat thick almost wool like black skirt, thin black leggings underneath and a baggy hooded sweatshirt most likely consisting of several shirts underneath since she was somewhat padded today. She had on thick bunched black ankle socks and what appeared to be her plain dark sneakers.

How cozy. How boring. Just for him no doubt as usual to try and prevent him from seeing what he already knew she had going for her. He would have to tear those offending garments from her beautiful body in the throws of passion and wrap herself up in the luxury that was him instead. He would have to teach her to enjoy the feel of him on her, both of them bare and skin to skin, sharing their body heat as lovers once she was past these silly games.

Her thick black lovely hair was restrained back in long pigtails that hung down to the middle of her back. Her hair was even longer when it wasn't tied up free to reach down her to her ass. He longed to run his fingers through her thick soft hair but he would have to settle for pulling on it instead. He had seen her hair like that before in homeroom before, prompting him to give her that special name all her own. His lovely little rabbit. Shy and soft and vicious. When she put her hair up like this he loved to take every opportunity he could to tug on her rabbit ears just to annoy her while sitting behind her in

English. It got her attention well and he knew it.

He fumbled in his jeans pockets pulling out his gum and quickly popped a piece in his mouth. He did it slowly and sensually in a way to draw attention to his mouth and took great pleasure in that she noticed. He winked at her but she said nothing to him. She walked past him up to his back porch stairs standing at the door. He followed her and stood by her at the door taking out another smoke to replace the one he ditched and lit it. How he could smoke and chew gum at the same time was perplexing to her. Waiting for him to say something or open the door she watched him put one hand in his jeans pocket as he smoked, the very picture of cool and cocky.

"Billy." She finally broke the silence and their mutual watching of one another. It was all she said to him, barely looking him in the eyes now and standing still obviously not sure of what to do.

"I'm surprised you even showed, rabbit."

She flinched at his annoying nickname for her so familiar and yet so painful to hear. He hadn't been able to call her that in a long while. Not since right before their argument and falling out.

"From the way you avoid me in class and around campus I highly doubted you would. Still mad at me over our disagreement? If you would just apologize for being mad at me for wanting to protect you and see you... then I would graciously forgive and I am sure we could just put this all behind us and be close again. Just like I know we want to be."

His voice sounded strained despite him trying to control it trying to play it off as if it was her responsibility to apologize in order to fix things. She could almost hear his pain, longing, and need for her in it underneath all the arrogance he layered it with. It almost made her feel bad and want to agree to what he offered. Almost. If only just so she wouldn't have to hear him sound so upset when talking to her. But in her pride of knowing she wasn't the one who messed it all up, she snorted at him and rolled her eyes.

"Do you deny it? You came. That must mean you missed me. Even just a little bit." He grinned trying to be smoother now to cover his

earlier showing of his feelings and making his voice more playful. His face was hiding it now too as he smiled at her, curling his lips, and looking down at her. He tried to scoot a little closer to her on the steps already being too close for her comfort.

She could smell him as he reached the last and highest step. He towered over her slightly and looking down at her with his long dark hypnotizing lashes that barely covered his intense blue eyes. It had been a while since she last looked into them this close and she still had not forgotten their power that they held over her. She looked away and he huffed softly, being triggered obviously by not getting to look into her green eyes as he was accustomed to doing.

Being so close to him and taking in the smell of his cologne, she wouldn't say his smell was unpleasant, just strong. It smelled good as it always did and almost like fresh rain and spices, a hint of clover in there maybe? That scent she had smelled the night he kissed her and wrapped his arms around her tight. It was surrounding her and making her heart long to be in his arms once more but she resisted recalling how he had tried to control her out of worrying excessively for her safety.

Shaking the thought of his warm arms cradling her in the comfort only he could provide, she got angry instead at it. She told herself he really needed to lessen up on the cologne and maybe not pour the entire bottle on himself. It made her head spin breathing it in almost as bad as his smell of Marlboros permeating his entire being.

"I'm going to ignore that little comment, Hargrove, and pretend you never said it. Let's just get this over with please."

That familiar bite. His rabbit's claws were out and at his throat once more. Her lips were pursed tight together and she clutched onto her book bag as if it were a shield to thwart any unwanted advances from him away from her and would protect her.

He took a drag off his cigarette and blew the smoke out his nostrils a playful smile on his lips. It was too close to her face so it began making her cough a bit. She waved it away and he watched her with humor dancing in his cold steely blue eyes.

"What's the rush? That needy to be all alone with me, huh? I assure you I will be more than good enough company for you tonight."

Did he ever stop smiling like that? She scowled at his suggestive assumption.

"You smell like an ashtray. Please don't blow your smoke so close to me."

He knew THAT was a lie. He was fresh from his shower and with his cologne on. This was the first smoke he had before she came here.

"Better yet, can you just not do that around me while I'm within close proximity of you, please? I would really appreciate it."

He chuckled at her wordy intelligent and polite mannerisms even when angry and laced with hatred for him.

So pristine and proper. So Miss Polly Pure. Uptight and reserved. He wanted to pull her into his arms and kiss her speechless, this time hard and fast and not gentle like before, just to shut her up. He wanted to tangle his fingers in her long dark pigtails, and tug them to bring her lips crashing onto his.

"Very well. On the condition I get to open my window and smoke near it and take breaks to when I want." He looked down at her moving his eyes up and down and she blushed.

"Fine. Now let's get started, alright? There's a lot we have to go over. You've been slacking off very badly. Mr Watkins told me all about it. You failed two previous tests and missed most of the homework assignments for the acts and scenes practically halfway through the play already. You continued to even when Mr Watkins gave you a break and giving you lighter work to do. It's no wonder you're drowning in class and failing your quizzes. Why can't you just care about your damn homework and study, Hargrove?"

Her tone was biting, feisty, and heated. So much for thinking she was shy and sweet or would come to him gentle and missing him. He bet she had a real naughty streak deep down in there somewhere just waiting to come out. A tigress pacing in a cage pretending to be a soft

kitten. It tempted him to bring it out of her even more just like how he used to before they stopped seeing one another and talking.

She was standing there still waiting impatiently for him to bring her inside the house.

"That needy to be with me, huh princess? I think you like being here with me since you are just standing around like that and talking to me so much. You must have missed me a lot."

His cheshire cat smile was really starting to irritate her and the fact that he would insinuate she would miss him after the crap he pulled.

He bowed mockingly and tried to take her hand to kiss it but she flinched it away, whether intentionally with anger, or out of being nervous and shy with him he couldn't tell.

"Don't get any ideas about this. Let's get one thing clear, I still don't really know you that well but I don't really like you either from what I have known and learned of you. So don't push it. I can always change my mind and walk. I don't have to be here helping you. I'm just paying it forward for you keeping Tommy away from me."

He gave a satisfied smirk in getting a rise out of her like good old times. It still pleased him greatly to set her on edge. But sadly, it would also just make it that much harder to get her to relax around him and get comfortable enough for his hands to wander and work their magic on her. He was almost positive she wouldn't last long once he did. He felt it the night they kissed. She wanted him but was too afraid to admit it. He half believed she started that fight between them just to be able to run from him.

When she didn't respond and stood there like a statue waiting, he dropped his smile and rolled his stormy blue eyes at her seeing she wouldn't make a move to go inside.

Mandy never set foot into anyone's home without being formally invited. It was just good manners. Something he obviously didn't possess. Finally seeing she wouldn't budge unless he made the first move, he motioned for her to come inside and opened the door to let her in.



He laughed as she skirted around him to pushed past where he stood and walked through the door timidly as if he had a communicative disease.

Before he follow her inside he flicked away his cigarette losing interest in it. Once inside she continued to show her distaste for him in any way she could manage by staying as far from him as possibly yet tailing him to follow.

"I hope to whatever God is listening that your parents are home? Or your little sister Max maybe?"

He grimaced at her calling Max, the snotty little brat who was the bane of his existence, his sibling. She KNEW that irritated him and that he had asked her before not to,.

"Don't call her that. We've been over this. Max is not my sister. We're not family, not by choice, anyway. And as for your other comment, I'm afraid not. They all went out to catch a movie for the next two hours. I guess you get me all to yourself. How lucky for you."

He walked so close behind her, despite her trying to get ahead of him not even knowing where she was supposed to be going, she could smell his gum he was chewing. It was icy cool and sweet. He had most likely picked that type to mask the smell and taste of his smokes on his breath. How could any girl want to kiss a guy who would taste like that? Even if he had a nice mouth it would be God awful she was sure.

"Wonderful." She said sarcastically giving up on being ahead of him and stopping to let him lead to where he chose, despite her better judgement.

She couldn't help herself but her eyes went to his broad shoulders, his long midsection, and his perfect round behind in his tight denim jeans as he moved. She snapped her eyes back up to him biting her lower lip when he looked over his shoulder as if he knew she was looking.

"Admiring the view?" He shot at her making her blush horribly and shake her head no as if she hadn't been checking him out. He gave a

knowing grin.

Mandy seemed very uptight, her walk was rigid and slow, as she paced him. She was all business and no play like an uptight secretary. She didn't look too thrilled to be here, but he was masquerading as the gentleman all the same. He didn't have her half as fooled as he thought he did, however, because the way his eyes assessed her told her everything she needed to know about what he might be thinking or planning.

They both walked past the living room and he paused at the kitchen. He snapped his fingers and turned remembering to offer her a drink or something to snack on from the supplies he bought earlier. Mandy refused as if she were Persephone in Hades with the God of the Underworld himself and if she had a single bite to eat she would be his and trapped here forever.

"No, I have snacks in my bag I brought and a bottled water too." She had hoped they would sit in the living room but when he ushered her past that down the hall to a door at the end, which she assumed would be his bedroom, all hope and prayer of that had been squashed in an instant.

"Suit yourself, cupcake. Right this way. I'd roll out the red carpet for you but I didn't have time to get one ready for you, your Highness."

His enjoyment of his own jokes he made at her expense were starting to get to her.

It also made her heart skip a beat with how he looked at her while trying to act like a chivalrous knight, but she kept her expression stony and hard to read as they walked closer to his room like her own death row sentence.

With her trailing behind him rather awkwardly and him guiding her to his bedroom door she saw other doors nearby one on each side of the hall almost opposite each other. The last door was his most likely so she guessed one belonged to his mother and father and the other one to Max.

She stood there and not wanting to intrude, being every inch the

polite and respectable lady she was raised to be, he opened his door for her and made a movement of his hand as if to usher her in.

While doing so, he gave her another short sarcastic bow as a butler would for royalty. A lopsided grin he could not hide was on his face and she felt as if she were a lamb walking into a wolf's den for the slaughter. He looked eager but also appeared to be attempting to contain it perhaps not wanting to scare her off. Too late for that now. She already wanted to run all the way back home and cancel this session.

"After you, your Majesty." She scoffed at him mocking her with royal labels and hesitated.

This was a new one. Normally he would call her 'doll', 'sweetheart', 'kitten', 'princess', or his new favorite... 'rabbit' because of her choice of hairstyle her long pigtails. She hated how he would pull on them in class if she didn't answer him whispering to her behind her.

No one should be able to make her feel that way when doing it but it sent a strange wave of emotion through her every time and made her catch her breath. It almost felt good to feel him tugging at her hair despite her still being cross with him over all he had put her through so far.

His voice was a low baritone sound, deep and smooth and satisfying like satin, and as he watched for her to enter she caught an unmistakable trace of mounting lust in his eyes. But she would not let him suffer any delusions about why she was here. She was here to teach him and nothing else. If he tried anything she would not hesitate to hit him in the sensitive spot that was every guy's weakness and run to get to safety and back home.

She looked him in his bright dancing icy eyes for a moment and stepped nervously over the threshold where the hallway carpet met the carpet of his bedroom.

It was pretty clean. Everything having its place. She was a bit surprised because she had expected a guy like him to have a messy typical bad boy's room. Something like clothes everywhere, naughty magazines under his bed, beer bottles perhaps strewn about his night

stand and dresser, or an overflowing ashtray with how much he seemed to smoke.

He was a three packs a day kind of guy she could guess. A real chimney. Whenever she saw him outside the school buildings he was lighting one up. But there was no trace of cigarette smoke in his room at all. It smelled clean. Slightly scented as if he had used something to make it smell nicer. What was it that smelled like fresh linen or an ocean breeze?

To her surprise, minus the few stereotypical hot babe and Metallica album posters that were on his walls, it was pretty pristine and PG. He must have somehow counted on getting her or some other girl into his room soon so he had more than likely spent the night before or the morning before school straightening it up. A coupe de grace preemptive strike to set the mood and the stage for wooing whatever girl felt lucky to be taken home by him and brought here.

This was his personal space as if a part of him. It screamed of him, smelled of him, had his personality all over it, and she could bet it was any girls dream to be here that was highly interested in him.

As she breathed in the air of his room trying to guess what he had used to make it smell so good she realized it smelled feintly of incense or scented candles. This only confirmed her suspicions even more that he had planned ahead for her being here. He had cleaned it most likely before she arrived knowing they would be in this small enclosed space together for a while. She had a feeling he had a different plan in his head for what the word 'study' meant than she did.

Stepping fully inside, rather nervously and slowly, it was sort of dim and getting even darker since the sun was getting ready to set within the next hour or two and twilight was fast approaching.

There was a night stand with a tall lamp so she switched it on and looked around taking in her surroundings. The feel and vibe, the color scheme, all of it. Just a typical high school boys room after all and yet so much more. She half expected tons of death metal pictures, gorey posters, or tons of smutty posters. Maybe even skulls, obscene statues, or dark rock and roll stuff in his room, but there

wasn't much of that at all. She noticed a Motley Crue signboard and a few lock boxes on a shelf along the wall.

The room was very aesthetically pleasing to the eye. White walls, white blinds, and windowsill edges, with at least two windows in his room. She tread on beige light brown short but soft carpet with a little throw rug placed almost center of the room. There was a small closet for clothes and shoes and a long mirror in the corner. A table with his cologne bottle collection and his grooming items sat there.

The mirror was most likely the one he used everyday to get ready and looking nice for the girls he planned to hit on at school or for when he went out on dates with them. She half snorted half chuckled at the thought of how silly they would have been to even entertain the thought of going anywhere with him.

She ran her hands over his wooden speaker boxes noting the stereo system in between them. Obviously a music lover, he had a lot of tape cassettes. Some looked store bought some home made and recorded by him she guessed. All of them organized and looking nice.

"Impressed with your newfound castle for the night, your Grace? Shall I send the servants way?" He taunted her and she stiffened trying to ignore it which only made him give a soft chuckle for getting under her skin.

"It'll do, peasant." She said finally poking back at him with her snappy sense of humor he loved and missed. He grinned at her going along with it.

Billy then got quiet and just watched her explore standing silently. He was giving her time to adjust to the atmosphere. He had never brought a girl into his room, not even just to simply go over book learning and school stuff, so he could see and feel this was painfully an intimate setting. Way different to all the other locations they had been together in, a close second being his Camaro.

In seeing all of this she was seeing even more of a personal side of him and it was a lot like opening up to someone a part of yourself that you would hardly want anyone to ever see.

"You have a lot of music. I know some of them but not all. I like your collection."

His jaw dropped playfully at her giving him an actual honest to goodness compliment for once. It felt nice to hear it after the harsh words she had exchanged with him a while back.

He watched her walk gracefully around his room, no longer so shy and awkward like before, and just waited for her to say something, anything, to give him an opening to shut his door and approach her.

"What do you listen to? Anything I know?"

He asked trying to sound distant and not too interested or like he actually cared but she could tell he did want to know.

She smiled and looked like she was more at ease now. Taking this as his cue, he came into the room following slowly after her and he closed the door behind him while folding his arms but in a relaxed manner.

He was enjoying this. His eyes said he was drinking in and savoring the sight of her looking around his room. He smiled, although more mischievously and not softly, and watched her through long lashes checking her out from behind as she looked at his posters and searched for a seat. His deep ocean blue eyes following her around the room and it made him curious as to what she was thinking while she touched things here and there.

She was curious about him and his setup, that much was obvious. To him that was a good sign that she was interested in what he was all about and had taken notice of what he had done to his room for her. Well... for others. For anyone of the female sex who would come in here, really, he reminded himself adamantly.

She shrugged and delayed her answer. He guessed it was because she wasn't wanting to get too personal with him.

"Mostly classic rock, easy listening, sometimes a little pop here and there."

He made a face but she ignored it.

"Hey, I like what I like and you like what you like. Don't judge."

She shot back with a passionate tone.

"What classic rock, then?"

He was probing now. Trying to find common ground and use it to make her feel he was getting to know her.

"Just random stuff I like. All the good vibes."

This girl was a closed book but he wanted to flip through every one of her pages and get to the surprise twist ending.

Looking at the side of his bed she saw more clearly now his nightstand and that it held an empty ash tray, clean and yet not previously unused, and a smaller alarm clock stereo with a tape cassette player built into it. It also held the black tall lamp she had used moments before and a military green colored corded phone.

Turning to him she saw his gaze had been on her this entire time and he was locked onto her with his hands in his pocket. It made her nervous and she looked away breaking the stare.

Mandy was trying to look around for a chair of some sort to sit in. There was no chair present and it suddenly dawned on her that the reason was he never planned on having CASUAL company, the kind that would not be going into his bed. Just how many girls had come here she wondered? Any of them she knew? Why would it matter?

His bed... it was made up nice with blue and white plaid sheets underneath over the mattress and plaid blue and white pillow cases. It had a dark blue heavier blanket, a throw like comforter, over the top of it and was neatly made. It looked warm thick and inviting and she traced her long fingers along the edge of the comforter feeling how soft it was to the touch.

He watched and tried to gauge her body language and noticed she didn't know where she was expected to sit down.

"I don't use a desk or anything so I don't have a chair either."

He said defending the lack of options still waiting. He watched her touch the place where he slept and it made him wish she would just resign herself to sit there already so he could sit next to her in a bold move to get close to her. She made it clear that wasn't on her mind however.

She turned and shrugged to him as if she wasn't sure where he expected her to sit since there weren't any options to other than the floor or the one place she did not want to.

"The bed is fine..."

He had said in an extremely suggestive tone, his offer breathy as if it had been right in her ear, while his eyes locked on her expression and reaction to it. He was testing her to see just how comfortable she would make herself in this enclosed space with him so near to her. His presence filled and dominated the room and it made her freeze when he told her she could sit on his bed.

He thought he saw a spark of her considering it but then it was gone in a flash. She looked up at him slightly defiant and placed her book bag on the floor then sunk down to the floor opting for that space instead.

She had seemed like she was going to obey at first and sit where he had suggested her to, but instead she kept going past the edge of the bed and sat cross legged on the carpet defiantly. He huffed almost upset at her choice but tried to mask it. She was definitely playing with him now.

While she sat, she was attempting to keep her long black skirt covering her legs and knees closing off his view of anything underneath. She was careful that her sitting position would not show anything beyond the hem of her skirt to him or any spaces in between for his prying eyes which grazed over her sitting form.

He smirked knowing somehow it wasn't going to be that easy to get her on his bed after all. He had hoped but he sort of saw this coming. She was definitely going to draw this out as long as possible until one of them would break and give in. He would make sure it would be her and not him. He would make her beg for HIS attention and crack



her armor eventually.

Nodding, halfheartedly finally accepting her decision, he pulled his pack of smokes out of his jacket pocket along with his lighter and then removed and tossed the leather item to the floor, his first and only mess in his freshly organized room.

She tried not to look at him as he shrugged himself out of it but she felt a familiar fluttering inside of her while watching him barely through downcast eyes as he shed the layer as smooth as a snake. His chest was strong and his neck and shoulders more powerful than she thought when he was covered.

He was wearing a white wife beater muscle shirt underneath that clearly showcased his muscular arms and long powerful torso. She noticed the same necklace he always wore at school around his neck since she had first seen him up close in class.

Mandy couldn't help but notice the familiar feint traces of the tattoo on his right shoulder just above his forearm that she noticed the day of his basketball practice after school in the gym. She could barely see it then. It had been her first time seeing him topless and she noticed it then but never bothered to ask. She was far too busy trying to ignore and avoid him to bother asking.

Now she was seeing it much more up close and could make out what it looked like. It was real. A skull with a smoking cigarette sticking out of its mouth. He noticed her staring at it and gave a small laugh.

"Heh... you like it? Most chicks dig skulls and dark deadly things like this. I had it done by a close and careful friend before I moved since I wasn't exactly old enough to have it done professionally in a shop. He did great work. Sometimes, if I flex it just right, I can make it look like the skull is laughing while smoking."

She swallowed hard not trying to think of what other muscles on his body he could flex and nodded slowly. She had seen how he moved on the court and just how strong his back, abs, hips, legs, and arms were.

He tried to show her what he meant and she watched as his slowly

rippling bicep muscle made the skulls mouth move slightly. Pushing herself to get over it quickly, she almost wanted to roll her eyes and laugh but she didn't want to be rude to him about something he thought was cool that he liked.

She brought her eyes back up to his thinking that keeping eye contact and being straight with him would be the best way to pass these few hours she had to be here with him. Mandy was not thrilled about being alone with him for so long. So open, so caged, cornered, vulnerable.

"Ummm... fascinating."

There was that sass again as she tried to pretend she didn't care. Knowing she actually was impressed and that she simply didn't want him to know it, he pretended to be taken aback by her feigned lack of interest.

But seeign through her act he give a grin even wider than before and his eyes went back to practically undressing her as he stared down at her on the floor. He wanted to see under that baggy hoodie of hers and wondered if she would ever take it off.

Noticing she had looked away from the tattoo and back into his eyes not giving away a single thought that she had inside of her about him he noticed it was starting to really bother him. He didn't know why but he would he would never admit it.

Why did he care if she liked what he liked? Did it really matter if any girl shared his interests other than having a good time and being pleased by him?

He then saw her eyes shift to the pendant dangling around his neck, it sparkled in the lamp light as he moved making the chain shimmer slightly. The necklace, however, that she was very intrigued by and he could see it. Her eyes kept darting to it but she said nothing as to whether or not she wanted to know or ask about it. Truth be told, she was often curious if it meant anything as if someone had given it to him with a purpose. If it had sentimental value or was just a fashion statement.

It looked like a necklace with a picture of a Catholic saint on it, although she couldn't be certain. Imagine, a guy like Billy Hargrove, being a religious type. It was amusing but definitely out of the question. The only God he believed in or worshipped was himself that much was obvious.

"The necklace was a gift from someone I knew a long time ago. They're gone now. I just keep it because... well I don't know why. I guess because I just never decided to toss it."

A girlfriend? A best friend? A relative? Mandy tried to make her face soften up more to him since he was sharing something personal that, although he hid it, meant quite a great deal to him. She had said she wouldn't be getting personal with him but he was making it very difficult and slightly wearing her down. She could feel it.

He pulled out a fresh cig and stuck it in his mouth and noticing her stare, he then made his way over to her looking down for a minute as she looked up at him. He was towering over her and his powerful legs and posture were tight, every muscle on him wound and coiled, as if his body language was screaming and flexing that he was unsure whether to sit on his bed or sit next to her on the floor. He was like a wild animal ready to pounce. She cleared her throat. The cigarette would be an issue.

"Oh. Right." He sighed and put the cigarette away remembering their deal from earlier. He wanted to sit with her so that meant no smoking for now. He weighed his options.

If he sat on the bed he would have access to try and rub her shoulders and breathe down her neck like he did in class sitting behind her which he knew got her excited.

If he sat next to her he would be able to lean in towards her and attempt to put his hands where they didn't belong.

Either way she was going to be absolutely smothered by this boy and being alone with him wasn't ideal at this point in time.

She was about to say something about respecting boundaries when he suddenly smirked and decided where he would sit regardless. He slid

down next to her and stared in front of himself for a moment playing with his lighter as if trying to decide if he really wanted another one or not and to go to the window instead.

Watching him shed the jacket earlier and seeing how well defined he was, a lump caught in her throat and made her bite her lower lip as she cleared it. She pretended to be interested in the work at hand that needed to be done and to dig into her book bag to find the things they would need for their study night. If he wouldn't smoke then she wouldn't move away.

She allowed him to sit next to her so long as he behaved himself.

*Yeah, right, Billy? Behave? Who was she kidding? She knew him way better than he most likely knew himself.*

Still he maintained his distance for now although sitting next to her as close as he dared and watched her curiously as she pulled out text book after text book and a little notebook and binder.

Licking her thumb and leafing through the pages, she opened the book to the required portion and he got comfortable while feigning interest in the book, although never really taking his focus off of her completely. His blue eyes were intense on her and it made her shiver a bit wishing he wouldn't look at her the way he was.

"So... where should we start?"

She didn't truly know just what the last chapter was that he recalled going over in class after his arrival before he stopped caring. It was that reason that had landed them both in this mess to begin with. His lack of caring and poor choices.

Mandy sighed and asked him nervously, her breath hitching slightly when he made to sit down beside her yet maintaining a comfortable distance to her surprise. With each minute it almost felt like he was scooting closer and closer trying to do it in a sneaky way. She barely caught it.

"Well... we could start with why you're so tense and cannot seem to relax. Here, I'll help. Allow me to take your hoodie for you."

He said this in a breathy low whisper, a seductive tone very suggestive, to get something he wanted from her. To remove some of her clothing. It was an underhanded move. She barely even had time to react and was caught off guard at his forwardness.

Billy wasted no time for an answer from her and moved over to her quickly like he was going to help her out of it. She recoiled and shrank away so he backed off and gave a slight chuckle shaking his head while closing his eyes for a minute.

*Shut down. Damn it. Maybe she's more pissed at me than I thought.*

Restraint from touching her at all was clearly way too much of a temptation for someone of his nature.

"Billy, you know why I'm here so let's not get things twisted. I don't want there being any misconceptions between us, alright?"

She had her arms hugging herself as if deathly afraid he would rip the sweatshirt off of her. Well, to be fair, the thought had crossed his mind...

He sighed noting this might be a long term familiar lecture from her as he pursued, if he even decided to. He got up and moved to the window to open it, the cigarette calling to him and undeniable now, that much was certain.

He lit it up cupping the flame from his lighter in his hands and blew the smoke out of the window instead of near her as per their agreement. He was looking out the window and not at her, clearly feeling spurned and being denied by her and maybe even slightly a little pissed off or frustrated. She almost gloated over it but continued to try and get through to him. She had to at least try.

"Billy, please. Be serious. I'm here to help you pick up your grades in English. I was told to by Mr Watkins because he knew I was your best shot for this and he wants to see you succeed to keep your basketball scholarship and graduate. Surprisingly this is the only class you are truly failing and struggling with. Your other ones you are barely passing according to him but this is by far your worst. So here I am to help and I hope you will take advantage of me being here."

She trailed off swallowing again when he gave his signature smirk at her looking her up and down, pausing his smoking to begin thumbing his lower lip at her. He gave a deep but soft amused chuckle at her over her choice of words. Once she realized how she said that last bit and noticing he did too, she could have kicked herself for it.

"Oh, I plan to..."

Her mouth went dry and she swallowed. It was all he said and even that simple phrase had made her blush a bit and get flustered in her stomach over him. He took another drag and blew the smoke out of his nostrils lifting his head slightly and grinning.

She cursed herself for wording it that way. Seeing her blush and look around the room anywhere but at him he then nodded in a way of showing he was clearly messing with her. His imaginary score board was up now. Billy: two points. Mandy: zero. The ball was now in her court.

"You know what I meant." She said wiggling in her sitting position and fidgeting with her pencil uncomfortably in her hands.

"Yes. I do. But... wouldn't you agree it would help our concentration better though if we were both relaxed? Here, I'll go first."

He began to hook his thumbs in the bottom of his muscle shirt and to lift it over his head showing his hardened abs, belly button, and below his pecks almost to his nipples making her get wide eyed at him getting up to run to him. She placed her hands on his gripping his shirt and yanking it back down to stop him.

"N-no. Really. It's okay I get your point." She stammered and he looked at how flushed she was when he made like he was going to bare his upper half to her.

"I thought you would agree. Alright, how about you then since you have more layers on I bet than I do. You're honestly so predictable, rabbit. So you relax and lessen the load... and I'll keep this on for you."

He looked at her intently to see if she was going to comply. Her

hands were still on his holding his shirt in place and when she noticed she looked down and dropped them realizing she had touched him.

He said this with a big grin knowing he had an answer for everything and was very good at persuasion. A skillset he no doubt forged by working on other girls in the past and present.

She looked at him unsure. What if he tried taking off his pants next? Mandy swallowed at his feral excited look that was now penetrating into her, daring her, questioning her.

"No funny business, honest. You have my word. Just trying to get you to loosen up a little. I've already seen how you look in regular clothes so there's no need to hide from me."

She narrowed her eyes not fully believing him.

But he had her in a corner. She could walk out but she needed him to try. Needed to try and help him. That's what she told herself, convinced herself, this was. Just about his grades and his need for improvement, nothing more.

He laughed softly, the sound low and throaty with a trace of victory over her. He could see how she was going over it in her head trying to decide on it and not making good on her threat to walk out and leave giving up on him.

She hated it but he made a good point, and he knew it too. She conceded with defeat by logic apparent in her eyes and began to slowly pull off the thick baggie hoodie and taking off several of her layered tops leaving only her off the shoulder top.

He stopped laughing and his mouth slowly parted as he watched her begin to strip articles of her clothing. He felt his palms get slightly sweaty while she pulled it over her shoulders and then her head and neck. Her torso stretching beautifully and her breasts becoming easier to see their curves underneath.

He groaned softly at how slow she was taking the hoodie off and when he made an attempt to help and put his hands underneath the edges of her extra shirts to help her slide them up faster faster she

slapped his hands away. That made him pull back in shock with wide eyes his mouth agape slightly for just a minute. Then it just made him laugh even louder.

He apparently thought it was adorable and that she was being catty or playing hard to get, but she was being serious about him keeping his hands to himself. Finally he backed off and he let her do it herself as he took another hit from his cigarette near the open window.

"None of that, Hargrove. Or I walk. Clear?" She shot at him finally pulling the last of her shirt layers all the way off her head, her hair in her pigtails getting slightly ruffled until she combed it with her fingers to fix it up a bit.

"Crystal." He agreed in a playful voice while crossing his heart. He was obviously lying through his lovely perfect teeth but being cute while doing it.

"No problem, rabbit. Was just trying to be helpful is all."

He put his hands up in retreat to her strict command and finished off his cancer stick. When she put her hoodie on the floor next to her she sat back down and picked up the book.

He took in the sight of her and the top she was wearing. It was very flattering to her frame. He dropped down next to her and scooted slightly closer just enough to look over her shoulder and at the book. Her shoulders were soft and pale, bared and on display to him completely, due to the cut of her shirt that had sleeves falling off and down her milky pale bare shoulders and how it hung loose over the edges of them.

"Why do you call me that?" Mandy asked with a small yet evident half scowl on her face while still looking for the page number and chapter they needed. She tried to ignore how close he was to her now and her breathing was picking up faster because of it. She tried to control it.

"Call you what?" He said, his breath lightly tickling the bare skin of her shoulder that was so close to his mouth now. She shuddered and nodded not trusting herself to use her words with how her stomach



was fluttering. What was wrong with her? She waited until she could breathe to clarify what she was asking.

"Rabbit. What made you start calling me that? Why?" She asked trying not to focus on the feel of his warm breath tickling her neck as he explained.

"Well... just look at you. You're soft. You're pale. You're terrified. You have these long locks of hair that look like a rabbits ears. You look like a frightened little rabbit whenever you are around me often bringing out these vicious claws to shred me. Are you afraid I'm the wolf that's going to come gobble you up?"

She turned to him with a shy blush, taken aback at how his tongue darted between his teeth to make his point as if he longed to taste her. Her response simply made him grin even more and show his beautiful white teeth and his small sharp canines.

For a smoker he had excellent teeth and gums and took great care of his mouth. She also saw he was practically making himself look like a wolf now. His hot sweet minty breath was mixed with traces of cigarette smoke as he breathed in the nook of her shoulder and neck close to her cheek, close enough to lick it.

"Ummm... okay... so, whatever. Okay, let's just start with the opening chapter and work our way up. This might take a few hours. Let's see here..."

Billy could tell she was trying to brush off his comments and actions towards her diving into the study lesson.

She decided his antagonizing wasn't worth worrying over or addressing and didn't want to give him the satisfaction of seeing how he got to her. She recalled the true and only reason she was here and she would not let him make her lose sight it.

Mandy opened up the thick English textbook, a copy of Romeo and Juliet by Shakespeare, and a binder full of lined paper and notes she had taken in class earlier for tonight.

Sitting so close to her now he couldn't help but notice the smell of

her sweet body spray. He could smell the traces of lavender or coconut shampoo in her thick long hair in her pigtails hanging over her shoulders.

Her skin smelled like sweet pea or cherry blossom lotion and it looked baby soft to the touch. It was so smooth looking it almost made him burn inside to reach out and touch it, tracing his fingertips lightly over the surface to appreciate the silky feel of it.

Apparently, he wasn't the only one who had prepared for this encounter. She had taken care of her body before presenting herself to him tonight and that made hope flutter in his chest that he hadn't struck out with her as much as he thought he had. He might still have a chance yet to touch her, kiss her, taste her, after all.

Smiling as she read to him, he leaned a bit closer to take in the sweet tempting smell. It made his mouth water and made him feel hungry like a wolf for her just taking in all that she was. He was vexed to reach out and grab a tempting thick portion of her hair and bring it to his nose to indulge in the fragrance.

But how she slapped his hands back from touching her made it clear to him that would be moving too fast. He had to do this carefully, slowly, smoothly, or he might strike out with her before they even got to first base. His plan was to get to second before the night was over but even first would make him happy for now.

So he allowed the torture to drag on and listened to her go over the story with him and read. She put all her heart and soul into it. He rested his chin on her shoulder almost putting his arm around her but not figuring out a way to do it that wouldn't make her jump or get upset.

The minutes passed and he listened to her talk about the main characters, their place in the story, and how they all related to one another. He heard most of it but her sweet smelling skin and her soft looking body called to him in a language only he could recognize, drowning out everything else as unimportant.

Her body heat from her sitting so close to him was making his excitement grow by the minute and he had to readjust himself a few

times in his sitting position for reasons he would rather she not know of. It was almost painful in a bittersweet way. She held him at bay and he could go no further unless she gave him some sort of sign that she wanted him to.

He could see it was difficult for her as well though by the way she stammered sometimes while reading and then having to double back and repeat her sentence as he got close to nuzzling her ear and neck absentmindedly. He was forgetting his place and began to slightly graze his lips on her shoulder making her shudder but she didn't pull away.

It was pretty hard for Mandy to concentrate with him looming over her slightly and so close to such an erogenous zone. She could feel his hot urgent breath fanning across her skin and it made her somewhat dizzy. At the same time she was indignant at his lack of respect for honoring her personal space.

But this was Billy Hargrove, after all, and when did he ever consider the feelings of others when it came to something he wanted? He had a very imposing nature and seemed the type to always get what he wanted, whatever he was after, one way or another.

She gave a slight eyeroll when she caught him looking down at her chest eyeing her cleavage. He had been staring into her babydoll shirt instead of actually looking at the book and she cursed herself for even wearing it tonight. She had thought her hoodie would stay on so it wouldn't matter. Hindsight is always 20/20 she reminded herself and she had half a mind to really annoy Mr Watkins in class the next day for setting her up for this if things went horribly wrong.

"Did you even hear what I have read to you? Billy? Hello, Billy? The book is not located anywhere near where your eyes are probing right now. Can you pull your eyes up and focus on the textbook please?"

He almost hadn't heard her when he saw the small squished yet curved trace of a line where her two beautiful breasts met. So round. So perfect. So full and soft.

She noticed him not breaking his stare at her cleavage when she spoke so she snapped her fingers at him. He startled a bit and looked

up with wide eyes and then began grinning at being caught in not paying attention.

She grumbled and sighed pinching her nose with her fingers. He thought she looked extra cute when she was angry with him. He tried to fake like he was sorry like a kid caught with his hand in the cookie jar and she shot him a look that could kill and saw right through his act.

"I'm sorry... tell me that part about... uhhh... well, where were we again?" He shrugged innocently with a cocky grin that really started setting her off once more.

"Billy, if you are not going to be serious about this, then I can always go home and we can try again tomorrow night."

He smiled that she would even consider coming back to him another day. That was it. The sign he was waiting for. She wanted his company. His stomach felt strange but he ignored it and chalked it up to his lust for her.

She sighed and had flipped to the Q & A section of the book for the questions that would be given on the test and began writing them on two sided notecards waiting for his answer. If he proved he could pay attention, she would read the questions and ask him to provide the answers after going through the material from the book a few times first.

He needed to memorize names, locations, relationships, meanings behind certain interactions between the characters, and other odds and ends questions about Romeo and Juliet before Friday, and here he was trying to peek down her shirt instead. He sure had his nerve to look a gift horse in the mouth and take it for granted.

"Billy, I feel like you're just wasting my time here." Mandy didn't even look at him in the eyes and kept her head down while writing.

"I have plenty of time for you. I'm all ears." He tried to slide his hand on the thigh hidden underneath her skirt and she pushed his hand off.

"No, you're all hands. Do it again and you can find a new study partner willing to put up with your nonsense and games."

He laughed softly at her snappy comebacks. God, she was fun.

"Oh, but I like our games, rabbit. I'm actually quite fond of you. I've missed this back and forth between us to be honest. Don't break my heart and give up on me so soon." He was mocking and teasing her. Faking like he would be hurt if she left.

She sighed and then looked over at him. Her green soulful eyes searching into his for any trace of sincerity.

He licked his lips and grinned at her with the corners of his sultry mouth pulling up deviously, his eyes sparkling at her. Then leaned back in a lazy way with his legs stretched out beside her and his hands behind his back on the floor. His palms were flat down on the rug with his back and elbows against the bed and his strong tanned arms held out straight behind him. He looked like Loki now, the God of mischief himself, taking shots at her and poking fun.

Her look must have made him feel bad so he actually seemed to drop the act and get serious with her.

"Okay, okay. So let's just cut to the chase. What do I have to do. Maybe if I learn something we can spend the rest of our time together having fun... doing... other things?"

He tried to look serious but he went right back to smiling like a little boy who just wanted to play.

He lifted one devious brow at her. It was so obvious he was pleased with himself for getting her to even wind up setting foot in his room, let alone sit next to him, that he was already making plans for the two of them which she wanted absolutely NO part of.

She tried not to think of all the other girls he most likely brought willingly into this place with intentions far from studying or talking which lead to the aforementioned "other things" later on.

"First off... no. And second... I'm going to go over the reading material with you. Just the the basic highlights and plot of the story.

Then I will read off the questions and you can read the answers at the back where the summary questions are."

He sighed pouting at her but she continued.

"Once you do that, I have flash cards and I will write the questions that might be on the test on one side of the cards, which means ALL of them to be honest, and on the other side I will write out all the correct answers. Then we will take turns reading them to each other trying to memorize them and scoring each other on how well we remembered the answers."

His pout suddenly turned to a devious grin at her while readying his next response to that.

"Oh, I'm pretty good at scoring, princess."

His pompous smile was really starting to get to her and fluster her insides.

Seeing that she would not budge on this, he sighed and lowered his head down a bit placing his chin back on her shoulder in a defeated pout. He was noting that he was making at least SOME progress when she allowed him to do this and didn't stop him or duck away from him moving her shoulder. He did notice however that she had tucked her babydoll shirt closer into her body to cover more of her cleavage this time around and blocking his view.

Her skin warmed to his touch once more, however slight it was, and she sat very still as he whispered while being very close to her ear.

"Boring. I bet you already know this entire story by heart though, don't you? That much was obvious when you made me watch the movie with you and you were quoting along with the dialogue. Maybe you could just... slip me the answers during the test. Hmmm? I'd give you something in return for it, of course."

When she looked at him in contempt he licked his lips devilishly and eyed her up and down to make her imagine just what that something would be. Turning away from him turning slightly pink in her pale cheeks she tried to ignore he had even suggested that.

"Umm... yeah, I do, actually. I love poetry and romance so a lot of Shakespear's stuff... speaks... to me. No, I won't... help you cheat, Hargrove. Forget it."

Why couldn't she talk right? It was like he was taking all the words from her mouth before she could say it and scrambling them all up making them come out all wrong.

He continued to slowly lick his lips. Each time he did she could hear it by her ear close to his mouth which made her feel the familiar tingling she felt when his mouth took hers that night.

He was shamelessly taking full advantage of being so close to her that he made a move. He went to put his hand over to hers like he wanted to hold and look at the book. When he did move near her he placed his large rough hand over her small soft one and traced little circles over the skin between her thumb and pointer finger with his own thumb.

"Awww, did rabbit not like that idea? Okay... how about you help me ace the test and I will treat you out somewhere then. I still want that real date and that second kiss you agreed to with me. Think of it as my apology for our fight? Just the two of us out somewhere. And THEN I will give you something special in return."

That last sentence he said right up close to her ear breathing into it. She shivered and closed her eyes swallowing hard.

Now he was pushing it. Her chest got tight and she began to have slightly labored breathing. The feel of his warm hand on hers and his fingers stroking her tender skin was making her heart begin to race and she hated every minute of it.

"Billy..." she said trying to find the words.

A chill went down her spine and a haze over her thoughts. She began to get the familiar rush of fire in her chest and stomach that she got when she first saw him walk into her class. She was now more red and blushing furiously at his touch.

"Not going... to happen. Not even if... you said sorry to me right

now... for that day." She moved her head away from his lips and turned to stare him down warning him to back off. The LAST warning. She was still struggling to breathe while speaking.

He turned to look into her lovely green eyes peircing her with his blue ones. Mandy wasn't stupid. She knew that he comprehended full well what he was doing to her and with the cruelest of intentions. He had practiced these smooth moves with a lot of girls he got to be alone with him. He had tried this on her before in the pool but she had still resisted.

He was wondering now just how far she would allow him to take it before she grabbed her things and stormed out of his house?

*Run, rabbit, run. Run little scared rabbit. Run from the big bad wolf.*

This pleased him like a predator sizing up his prey. His mouth was craving her again. Wanted to taste her lips once more. Why had he been so mean to her before? It was wasted time when he could have used it to get closer to her and woo her better.

She went quiet as she looked into those hungry feral eyes. She felt his hand trace a line up her own hand and wrist then to her elbow where it rested along her upper arm and shoulder messaging it with his fingertips.

In one smooth move he managed to pull her thick long black hair from one pigtail aside off of her neck and shoulders exposing her fair skin and the nook between. He then nuzzled her face sideways to press his mouth to her there just like he did on the couch in her living room. He moved his lips close to the base where her shoulder met her lower neck and jawline along her smooth clavicle.

His breath was slow and warm and it made goosebumps raise up on her body, a familiar feeling but more intense this time. He gave a soft laugh mixed with a soft moaning growl and this practically made her cry out. Hearing him make those noises for the first time and feeling the effect it had on her was devastating. He had softly moaned before but nothing like this.

Billy continued to pant and moan and put his lips to her earlobe



while whispering her name along with his pet name for her. She froze and gulped loudly still clutching onto the book for dear life as if it could save her from his wicked hands and lips.

"Awww, no date after all? Well we can have it here then while we study. I like roleplay, it's very... kinky. Maybe we could... read lines together? I'll be your Romeo and you can be my Juliet? You make me hard and I'll make you wet?" He chuckled at his own crude poetry.

The look on his face was carnal and hungry as he traced his tongue along her pulse. He was definitely amping up his seduction of her now. The previous time on her couch being tame compared to this with no father around to come in and interrupt.

She could feel him smile against her neck as his lips traced around her soft skin invading all of her reasoning so she couldn't push away. He took down all her defenses with his low husky deep voice and the horrible things he was saying to her.

It made her stomach do strange things, flip flopping with sharp stabs that felt really good, and it also upset her at how easy it was for him to do something like this to a defenseless girl like her. All of her armor was coming undone and he was taking advantage of it for every moment he could.

*How does he know all the wrong things to say in all the right ways to make me feel like this? Oh, God, I need to leave before this gets to be too much!*

She thought as she stifled the urge to make her own noises mingling them with his. That would be a dead giveaway that she was enjoying it and she would not let him know the full extent of what he was doing to her.

It wasn't fair. She was trying so hard to resist and he was just too close to her with that horrible roaming wild mouth of his that shook all sentient thought from her brain. He was just too much to handle and so very wicked.

With a devious and gorgeous angel like him here on earth who needed demons in hell? She was almost no match for him, his bold

moves, him with all his experience and her with her lack of will power.

"I bet you're just as eager as I am to get to that amazing little love scene. I would love to show you Romeo ain't got nothin' on me, princess. I can touch you in all the right places no one else can. I know every sensitive spot on your body without ever having been there. Trust me, I've never had a complaint."

His words were making her weak, dropping all her defenses, her body aching to give into him. He kept throwing temptation after temptation at her mercilessly and without pause.

She closed her eyes for a moment and her breathing seemed to stop for a few seconds. He had caught on to this and nuzzled into her neck, her hair, her dip in her shoulder. He took a few strands of her raven colored thick soft locks and breathed her in.

Closing his eyes he gave a more urgent and louder moan tracing his hot wet mouth up to her ear again and as his lips parted to tease the lobe, her own lips parting for a moment feeling him breathe against her harder than before. She could hear and feel him everywhere inside and out as he slowly drove her mad with the sounds he was making. Her heartbeat quickened and her pulse began to race to a finish line it would never have the strength to reach in time.

"Why so quiet, rabbit? Don't you like the idea of me touching you? I know it's been on your mind since that night. Mine too. I can make your body sing for me then scream later."

She felt a warm sharp feeling spread down from her stomach to the apex between her thighs. She could also feel the sudden harsh ache of desire for him and it was undeniable. His tongue tickled her when his warm lips grazed back down to the place where her heartbeat sang from within. Mandy bet he could both hear it and feel it with his own mouth that it was beating wild and fierce for him. That he could taste it racing because of what he was doing to her.

Nuzzling into her further he placed his other free arm around the small of her back, rubbing it gently, then moving his hand around to her side resting it on her hip. His fingers tried to explore along the

seam of her thin black skirt.

Trailing his fingers almost down to her knees she gasped ever so lightly when she felt his hand tickle her kneecap soft as a feather cruel as a talon. She had hoped he didn't notice but his soft laugh against her throat let her know without a doubt he had heard her reaction to his touch.

"Billy... I doubt there is a... poetic bone in your body." She tried to talk but could barely manage to get the words out. Willing herself to move and push him away she found that she couldn't. He felt too good kissing and touching her. Her eyes were closed and her head tilted back in submission to his torments.

"There's a VERY important bone in my body... wanna see it?"

He said huskily into her ear and softly moaning into it to emphasize. He took his other hand that wasn't on her knee and grabbed hers placing it gently on his stomach and sliding it down even lower to the location he was referring to. She felt it for a moment underneath his jeans then jerked her hand away.

He continued kissing her as she swallowed trying so hard just to breathe. But every time she tried, she was breathing him in and he was suffocating her. That was damn near enough to do her in and she was very close to losing all control and resistance to him.

"Billy... please stop. You don't understand at all. You could never be a Romeo for me."

His breath was eager, urgent, his blood running hot in his veins for her, and his breathing was super fast matching pace with his growing need constrained only by his tight jeans. He wanted her to undo the zipper and set him free. To let him out to play with her. She was trying to pry his hand from her knee that was now working its way up higher and underneath her thin long skirt.

It had almost touched her inner thigh making her body stiffen with a self denied need to feel him caress her there. She was shaking horribly as he held her to him firmly not letting her move much as he tried to explore in between her thighs. His fingers seeking desperately

and climbing slowly over time inch by inch to its targeted destination. It was like the time he had teased her in the pool at Steve's only much worse. His hands were magic on her skin bringing a sure promise of carnal delight she was no match to fight off.

"Romeo... was a true lover. His heart was... about more than just... touching, kissing, and..."

She trailed off trying to will her eyes to open but his hands and lips on her was clouding her mind making it impossible for her to speak coherently with full sentences. If she had been standing and not sitting, she would have fallen to her knees in a terrible weakness unable to hide what he was doing to her body. He was too good. Too experienced in the art of seduction.

"And...?"

He smiled, his lips curling and widening, as he kissed a light trail from the nape of her neck back to the side and teasing her quickened pulse with his hot wet tongue, slowly letting it taste her heart as it pounded for him.

Her eyes wanted to roll into the back of her head. The feeling of his fingers threading in her hair made her entire scalp tingle as he massaged the crown of her head all the way down to the back of her neck. He tugged on the ends of her pigtails making the feeling tickle all the way up to her scalp.

With a soft moan unable to control it she could feel something between her thighs burning and aching at her core. It was deep and she needed him to fix it and make it stop. The feeling was almost too much but she managed to at least get his hands off her thigh and back to holding her knee again where it rested tentatively.

"Fucking?" He said it so sensually into her ear and then laughed softly against it and kissed it. The word sent spikes of pleasure rippling through her very core.

The way he had said it so dirty and so casually gave her hot flashes and images of them in his bed together, him pinning her down with the weight of his smooth and tan body and moving over her while

kissing every crevice of hers sinfully in return.

She thought of all the moments in her adult romance novels of how he might move and what he was capable of doing to her. She was practically a puddle melting into him as he kissed her throat and continued to play with her hair.

His hand returned to rest once more on her inner thigh but not daring to go any further without her consent. Her mouth was dry and his was hot, wet, and needy, as it kept kissing her neck and shoulder. She could feel his tongue tasting her skin.

"Billy... please..." Breathlessly, Mandy whispered to him begging for him to stop. Or was she begging him to keep going? She didn't know anymore. She couldn't think straight.

When she stiffened up trying to lock up the feelings of what he was doing to her, he read her body language shift and he stopped his lips from teasing her flesh. He froze and then took his hand off of her thigh and placed it under her chin turning her head to look at him, his eyes locking with hers intimately. His mouth was merely inches away from her own and it was getting closer. He licked his lips preparing to steal hers at any second.

"Yes, Mandy? Is the rabbit going to run or stay? Cuz I know for a fact rabbits are very keen on fucking. Very good at it too. Only they're too quick. I don't like it fast so I'll draw it out just for you. I want you to feel every minute of me pleasuring you. You won't want me to stop."

His blue eyes looked deep into hers with a wild need, a carnal appetite. He admired how flushed her cheeks looked, so red now when formerly pale almost like porcelain. She was gorgeous with how full and wanton her lips had become as if begging for him to kiss her senseless.

The shy little nerd he first saw, the little nobody, it was like she was being transformed into everything he could possibly want. She was very saduceable and worth every attempt to succeed.

Billy wanted so badly to taste her soft lips with his own and wondered what it would be like for his tongue to glide across them

this time. Their last kiss had been so tame and gentle. He wanted it raw and deep. Maybe even to slip his tongue inside of her mouth slowly and letting it dance with hers. He also wondered what it would be like to slip his tongue into her somewhere else and what it would do to her if he did.

He noted how she looked so beautiful in the lamplight of his room, her pale round lovely face, her sea green eyes sparkling with need, her mouth open in a small O shape and her chest rising and falling intensely as she struggled to regain her breath and recover from his attentions on her.

His hand rested lightly under her chin trying to guide her face closer to his but just like last time, at the last moment before contact, she resisted. The same fire he had seen in her eyes when he had backed her up into her locker the first day they saw each other had returned and he could see it burning within her irises.

The fire of determination. Willpower. Tease and denial. The fire of passion kept in check yet struggling all the same as it mixed with her unbreakable spirit. It raged and roared on inside her not backing down and it was obvious her heart and mind were arguing with her body unable to choose between her longing for him and her fear of him.

"No. No, I can't. That's not what I want." She shook her head slightly fighting him still.

Mandy was afraid of him. Terrified even with him so easily overpowering her. Yet still she refrained from allowing him to pull her closer. Her chin was turned up again at him, ever the defiant and stubborn passionate girl he wanted so desperately to tame, as the battle raged on from within her.

Mandy's mouth went from soft and plump to a hard determined line pressed tightly together to deny him access. She vowed to give no more kisses to him and she was going to stand by it this time.

She shook her head with a final no and pulled out of his grasp for what seemed like an eternity of battling back and forth. He pulled out all the stops and still lost with a defeated grumbling noise

lowering his head in frustration.

In reality, they were both losing, both of them missing out, because it was clear that both of their bodies were yearning for one another. Knowing the truth of that now she could no longer hide her need for him whenever he would be near her. He could tell that she wanted it as bad as he did and so he would not rest until he gave her what they both needed.

It pained him, this cat and mouse game she was playing with him, and he wondered if there would be a breaking point for him when he would grow tired of it. Or if she would grow tired of it herself and remove herself from him completely. Maybe let him be at night and stop coming into his dreams robbing him of his peace of mind. She should just give in. It would make things so much easier if she did.

Looking over at her, the delicate curve of her neck where he had been kissing her, her small shoulders and her lovely figure, her ample breasts he knew she possessed hidden in the baggy black babydoll tee she wore, he felt his desire constantly stirring for her with satisfaction and release always looming on the edge unreachable from his grasp.

He almost had her if she would just stop talking and allow him to kiss her all over her body and remove that sinful top of hers. Her clothes were like chains wrapped tight about her that he was aching to break her free from. He longed to see all of her, every last inch, all that she kept hidden from him.

Her long legs were covered thin black leggings and barely hidden by that black lacy skirt. It was high with the way she was sitting giving him a slight view of her inner thighs past the knee and it made him stiffen just thinking about removing it to see higher beyond the hem line. Places where he longed to place his fingers as well as explore with his lips and his tongue...

He groaned and scooted back leaning on his bed and sighing as he played with his lighter already feeling he wanted another one to calm him from getting so worked up over trying to seduce her and failing. What did he have to say to get her to even give him just one kiss? Even the smallest slightest kiss so he could show her how he could

rock her world with his mouth alone and make her think twice about not letting him in to show her pleasures she had most likely never known before?

He was horny, he was frustrated, he was angry at her demure attitude, but he tried to remain calm so as not to blow this. He had waited for three months since they met and two weeks after finally figuring out how to prompt Mr Watkins to recommend her to him for a 'study session' for her to be here. And now, finally, here she was in his room all to himself. But every time he tried to be smooth with her she found the strength to pull away and go back to the studying part ignoring his seductive attempts at breaking through her shell.

"Romeo had something you don't, Billy. Believed in something you don't... obviously." She said softly to him as if sad over it.

He scoffed at that remark. As if some made up fairytale character could have more going for itself than a real flesh and blood person like him.

He got up and moved to the window so he wouldn't smoke her out or make her cough. He had told her he would so it was only right. Sitting on his bed with the window open he lit up another cigarette and took a long drag doing a Frenchie blowing the smoke out of his mouth, up his nose, and then making small cloud rings with his tongue.

She got wide eyed at his skilled mouth and it made him give her a cocky grin enjoying her seeing his little smoke tricks. Mandy looked away and recovered from being distracted by his lovely mouth going back to the book and their discussion still determined to explain it to him. She didn't know why she was trying so hard to convince him of anything but she was defending love which was something she believed was the purest most special thing in the world. He watched her as he killed his cigarette within minutes.

"Jesus, you talk about him as if he's real. It doesn't get any more real than me, rabbit." He laughed low in his throat seemingly amused by her affections over someone who was fictional when she had a natural born lover practically at her fingertips. All she had to do was reach out and want him back.



"I'm not delusional, I know the difference. You're real and he's not, but even then I would prefer his company over yours."

She ground it out angrily at him now. He just didn't get it. He really, truly, didn't understand how she felt and why she could love someone like Romeo even if he was imaginary.

"Oh, and why is that, sweets? Go ahead and compare us. It doesn't matter because I know I have more than enough to offer to you. I have a stable job now, a decent wad of cash, and a set of fast wheels on a sweet ride to get me where I need to go in life. I'm flesh and blood and I exist. So why not let me show you? Why not give me a chance?"

To make his point he pulled her close to him making her feel his strong hard body against her soft one and she could feel the heat radiating from him as he kept comparing himself for her. It was as if he was jealous over a fictional lover of hers, quite comical actually, but he was undeniably bragging to her.

He placed her hands on his chest so she could feel his heartbeat through the opened shirt exposing his smooth tan skin and his warmth. He smelled tantalizingly delicious to her and felt good even more amazing to the touch. It was making her ache to kiss him almost abandoning her personal vow entirely.

"He's a sappy lovesick character in a book. He didn't have much to offer a woman at all except maybe his smooth talking tongue, which is a skill I both admire and possess. By all accounts, I think I would win. So tell me again what it is he has that I don't?"

He laughed but she didn't and the way he was mocking the things she was feeling and taking seriously made her pull away from him in anger at how callous he could be about all of it. It seemed to upset her even more for not taking her words and observations about his character in the book seriously.

Eventually he gave into her and humored her. He looked at her with a serious expression as if truly asking her to give him the answer and that he was actually paying attention. This ought to be good. Nothing she could say could get him to change his mind but she could have

her fun and try.

"Real or not, he didn't need all those things that you have. Even as a character in a play, he was written as a true lover because he cared more about the feelings of the heart than the physical joys of a sexual union. He instead wanted true love to go with it hand in hand. One on one forever with one person. Loyalty to his true heart's desire. Romeo not only loved deeply and believed in true love, he also believed in the sanctity of marriage and having his soul tied to another for eternity. He mourned the consequences of the fate of his stars that would lead him to her, and his demise, somehow sensing them in advance even. But he still went for what he wanted trying to defy those stars. He wanted his Juliet. Forever."

She said looking at the big book in her lap and flipping through the pages as if searching for something to use as a visual for him if her words didn't quite sink in.

This revelation hardly surprised him. He wasn't a mushy type of romantic. He was a hot blooded, fast paced, hands on kind of guy. She may be right to say he wasn't like her beloved fictional hero she adored so much.

He had read a little bit of the book and knew how Romeo spoke to women and how poetic and deep he was. But it was mostly just jibberish to him. Some sentences he could make out and understand while others were far too complicated and wordy for him to care.

But as for Romeo, despite her noble claims about him and his "pure" heart, Billy knew that Romeo lusted for the girl who spurned him and all the girls he chased. It was lust regardless because love at first sight without lust being a key factor didn't exist. Couldn't exist. Love at first sight was the unmistakable act of purely lusting over someone you just met. He would know all about that as he had done it many times.

When discussing this he recalled how Romeo found a new lover to fixate upon. It almost seemed as if he even used Juliet as a replacement when his former lover he pined for had forgotten all about him and denied him. He learned that much from watching the movie with her that night as she explained it to him.

Romeo was just as hungry as he was when it came to physical need and appetites over women. much like himself, he was a smooth good looking guy who could steal the ladies hearts and make them fall for him with just his words alone. That much he kind of figured he had in common with the imaginary loverboy.

If this is what got Mandy wet and hot to trot, then what was the problem? He was working on that right now and giving it to her to try and win her over. He could see it had an effect on her and that it was working when she would relax and allow him in to do it. But each time he would get her going she would shut down stop him and push away. Why?

It didn't really matter. He just regurgitated it for class because it's what Mr Watkins wanted to give him a barely passing grade. The whole thing was stupid to him. How was Shakespear and reading about all of this going to help him in life and prepare him for the real world, anyway?

Despite them not seeing eye to eye on how great the love story was, the feelings he was having for Mandy were growing stronger the more he spent time with her, he couldn't deny that. He had stuffed them down killing them off for what he knew they were doing to him and had been doing all along.

Feelings were a waste of time and useless that would do neither one of them any good nor would it matter once he slept with her. To feel was to set oneself up for pain and that is something he would never allow to happen to him.

"Until death is a powerful thing to promise and it can always go sideways given enough time. I've seen that promise melt before my very eyes, because I know the harsh truth that nothing lasts forever."

Mandy looked at him up from the book noticing he was opening up a part of himself to her. She wanted to explore that but didn't want to upset him if she dug too deep.

Billy sat there for a moment thinking. He would never assume he loved Mandy nor would he entertain the idea of forever with her, which seemed to be what she was seeking in life judging from how

she talked. The only reason he was trying so hard was just that he wanted her body and to show that he could be the one to pleasure her. To take her to new carnal heights with him and feel her in a way that made sense to him. Love didn't need to factor into this. His heart was dead to love for a reason.

"I'm sorry to hear that. Sometimes love doesn't work out but that doesn't mean we should stop trying to search for it just because someone doesn't wind up being right for us. We just keep searching and hoping. Did someone... hurt you? Someone close to you that broke your heart, Billy?"

She sounded genuinely concerned and he hated it. He didn't need her pity over anything he had dealt with in life. He didn't answer because he didn't want to remember his mother or how her relationship with his father fell apart at the seams and how she left them both. When he didn't respond she quietly let it go perhaps hoping he would talk with her about it whenever he might be ready to.

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to pry. I know it can hurt to love someone and then lose them." She looked down for a moment thinking on this.

"Not me. I've never had that with anyone and never wanted it. Just someone else I knew. A long time ago. She moved on and found someone else and I guess she is happy now."

How did she manage to get that much out of him? How was it so easy to say that to her? He didn't open up to anyone. Mandy was worming her way in and it made him feel strange. The looks she would give him sometimes made things stir inside of him he felt he had no business feeling but sometimes he couldn't help it.

"I see. Well, I'm sorry all the same." She tried to reach out to touch his shoulder but when he pulled away gently she bit her lower lip.

"It's fine. Don't worry about it." He forced his usual grin at her going back to his comfortable mask as if nothing was wrong. This must be how he dealt with things often so she left it alone.

"I still say I'm better than Romeo. You still have yet to prove me wrong, rabbit." He said in a playful smart ass tone while inhaling and

exhaling his smoke near the window.

Mandy continued and ignored his cocky remark. Why would she try so hard to get someone like Billy to understand this? He obviously cared nothing for it. That really bothered her but she remained calm still trying to convince him that love was worth while to seek and possess.

"It's not a contest, just simple truth written in black and white. Okay, I'll try again. Romeo not only loved deeply and believed in true love, he also believed in eternal love. He only had eyes for one person. His Juliet, forever."

"Again, forever is a long time. Someone could get bored being with the same person that long."

His counter made sense but she knew just how to counter it back. It was starting to feel like they were discussing Shakespear and Romeo and Juliet less and less and rather discussing more personal issues of his own instead. But she continued still determined to show him true love did in fact exist. Maybe she could change his mind and that would open him up more to the reading material. Maybe it would even benefit him personally as well.

"Yes but, Juliet loved him back deeply, Billy. That's why he didn't mind spending forever with her. She completed him and wanted the same thing he did. They were destined to be together. In other words soulmates. I believe in soulmates and there have been cases that prove it to some extent. People meeting each other for the first time and feeling as if they had known one another their whole lives. Just feeling comfortable with that person right from the start."

As much as he didn't want to admit or think on this, he almost felt that with Mandy the first time he saw her. But he stuck to his belief that it was simply lust and wouldn't let it be anything more than that. It never was.

"I'm simply saying he fell for and wanted to love only one person in his life and not just have a need for a physical connection with someone at random whenever the mood suited him. He had a desire to actually love the one he physically longed for and wanted her to

love him in return. To be with her forever, even if it was in death, if he couldn't be with her in life. Juliet wasn't a conquest to him. Juliet was his sun."

Billy seemed to put up a wall within himself each time she had said the words 'love' or 'marriage'. He didn't cut her off from talking, however. He simply focused on smoking and quietly not interrupting. He just wished she could understand he wasn't interested in romance. All he wanted was to work on the physical part with her so he could show her how physical connection could be so much better than the emotional. Her body was talking to him and likewise his body longed for hers in a mutual way that apparently only he could see. Couldn't she see it? Couldn't she tell? He knew she could feel it every time they touched so what was the problem?

Putting out his cigarette in the ashtray on his windowsill he came back down to the floor rolling his eyes and let her show him what she was trying to share in the book. She pointed to the iconic line that had been in cartoons, t.v. shows, and he also remembered hearing it when watching the movie with her that night.

"What light through yonder window breaks? It is the East and Juliet is the sun."

She spoke the words with such passion and her eyes were moved with emotion as they gazed into his. She smiled sweetly at him and waited for him to get it. It was painfully obvious to him now that love and what it stood for meant everything to her. And so did the archaic tradition of marriage. Finding the one she would spend the rest of her life with was the goal she had laid out for her life. She was not a lay. She was not the kind of girl to just put out. She had long term plans and it involved being with a lifelong partner that would stay by her side.

He wondered at this, maybe even admiring it slightly, even if he didn't agree to it for himself and his own life. But it almost pained him to hear it out of her mouth because it was something he couldn't give her. Love wasn't in his heart for anyone nor was a desire to wed and be a husband. He would never become a culd-de-sac urban nine to five father of three.

His life had to be wild and free and full of adventure. He wanted to travel and see the world not be tied down to one dead end town. His was a spirit of fire and it had to burn out of control engulfing everything it touched, even her, if she would let him. Burn her up with passion yes, but lie to her pretending to be in love with her? Billy would be damned to fake being in love with a girl just to sleep with one. That was going too far and even he didn't feel right about it. That was the one lie and line he would never use on Mandy. She respected herself and in a way he respected her too.

He had told lies before but he wouldn't lie about that. Every girl he was with he always told them from the beginning he would not love them or fall in love with them. They accepted that. Then they accepted his skilled tongue in their mouth along with everything else he could offer them with his body. Marriage? He wouldn't even give it a thought. He still wanted to run around and play not be chained down by one person. Even if that person was Mandy, as beautiful as she was to him.

He scoffed but pointed to the book taking another puff on his ciggy.

"Man, girls really eat this shit up, don't they? Love. Marriage. Baby in a baby carriage. Okay."

He had said 'marriage' to her in a mocking tone with such distaste and disregard for it. For that moment, the angry and nasty side of Billy was back again. She could see it all over his face as he tried to look elsewhere but at her.

He laughed about it at first but saw in her eyes that she was serious and was starting to look a little bit hurt at his mean responses. She crossed her arms hugging them tight to her chest and lowered her voice to a gentle shy tone.

"There is such thing as true love, Billy. And I believe everyone deserves to experience it at least once in their life time. I believe everyone deserves love, no matter who or what they are or where they come from. Even... what they have done. Love is also forgiveness. Love can change people and move mountains."

She looked back into his eyes deeply when she said this and it

pierced him somewhat catching him off guard. It made him uncomfortable and he shifted slightly but tried not to let her know how her words were getting to him.

"Love is more powerful than hate and can conquer all things. I really believe that. And I'm sorry if you don't. I won't push you into this, it's your choice whether you believe or not at the end of the day. But just know that I believe even you deserve love like that. In fact, I believe you need it the most."

Her words cut him deep and hurt him but not in a way like she had insulted him. More like that she had seen through him and made the most profound and honest statement directed right at him and with more conviction that he had ever heard someone have about anything or anyone.

How could someone like her, so fragile and seemingly afraid of living life to the fullest unlike himself, hold so much passion and emotion inside of her as if she had already had? How could she say all the right things that clawed down deep inside of him, tugging at the dark places where he buried all of what she unknowingly sought after?

It almost made him choke back on a small lump forming in his throat once he was understanding what she had really said. As if it had been specifically meant for him. How could she know what he had done or been through? Know how empty inside he truly was and that he had made himself that way? Know that he had been without love for so long that he had numbed himself to it?

She couldn't. She had no right to. So he tried to hide it speaking in a sarcastic edged tone when responding to her. He could not let her know that she was making him have second thoughts about anything they were discussing.

Looking at her once more in her deep green eyes he saw that the passionate fire from earlier was now replaced with a tangible visible sadness, a sliver of frustration, a curious need to understand why he had to be so negative. It made him regret his sarcasm he laid out on her just a bit. He wished he could have bit his tongue and simply allowed her to dream and hope for him and for herself.



"Okay, yeah... love and marriage and all that warm fuzzy shit. But why does love have to factor in with longing? Why does marriage have to accompany need or desire? These are normal feelings people experience just like hate, fear, and sadness, and they don't always mix. A person can lust for someone without being in love with them. Can desire someone without wanting to be with them forever or marry them."

She suddenly lit up losing the sad look and smiling softly. Now he was playing ball with her. Attempting a real conversation and debate. Hope fluttered in her heart for him after all. He was starting to get it and was opening up more to discuss it with her.

When he said that gazing at her with his cigarette dangling from his lips, it was the first truly thoughtful thing she had ever heard him say. Even if it was meant as a comment to counter her previous statements and try to disprove what she said about true love being pure and essential for a human being to be shown and to feel.

"You're... you're right. Longing isn't always about love. Desire can be heartless and one sided. Physical attraction can be present without the heart being involved or a need to keep a partner in marriage until death. But should we live that way? Random connections don't seem to foster anything deeper than a sexual physical experience and gratification but it is fleeting and empty if nothing is behind it."

"Have you ever had sex, Mandy? If not, how would you know if just that physical act alone would not be enough to sustain you and satisfy you without needing all the other stuff that you say comes with it?"

She blushed at how blunt he had asked her such a personal question and looked away from him for a moment. Almost as if she were ashamed that she hadn't. She normally prided herself in that but he made her feel inadequate for never having that experience.

"Okay, that was a bit personal. Let me skip that and just say this. Sex is pretty amazing. It feels great, improves people's mood, relaxes people, and I don't see the problem with hooking up to do it randomly. Both partners get what they want and then move on not having to get too tangled up in each other to where they would

eventually hate one another making everything go sour between them. It's simple."

He stated and shrugged once more checking her. She was glad he didn't linger on wanting to know the answer to his question and letting it slide.

Mandy thought for a moment on what he said nodding slightly. She could see where he was coming from. But there were other factors he was missing.

"Maybe so. It seems to work out for some. But think about the bigger picture. Hooking up all the time you might wind up picking up things from all the partners you have been with."

"Hey, I'm good. I've always used protection and have a clean record of health. So..." Billy said quickly and she wasn't sure how to respond to that for a moment. He grinned a bit at her reaction but he was telling the truth. He wasn't stupid and knew the no glove no love rule.

"I wasn't saying... that you... I didn't mean that to be aimed at you personally. I just meant that devoting yourself to one partner and keeping it one on one faithfully, you never have to worry about something like that."

"That I can agree on. You make a valid health and safety point." At least he gave her that one. She pressed on.

"Also, don't you think it might be more fulfilling to feel and be connected to one person long term and to learn and grow with someone over time? To be loyal and true to that one person and knowing they also belong to you body, mind, and soul, only giving their love and body to just you? I believe there is such a soul out there for everyone and that it's important to seek the soulmate that was meant for them."

She smiled softly at him feeling as though she had checkmated him and he appeared to actually be thinking about what she said when she countered his disagreement.

"The soul, huh? Well... if you believe in that sort of crap. Then, yeah, I guess."

He had conceded and she smiled at him feeling there was some hope for him yet after all. He was no engaged with her and actively listening and discussing. This was a start. A good one.

"I do. Don't you? And if not... why? Is it because of the one you knew that got hurt? Is it something that happened to you personally? If you don't mind me asking..."

She said with an almost pained expression on her face as she kept looking at him. He looked away not wanting her to see into his eyes anymore as this was getting too heavy a discussion once more for his comfort.

He sat and thought about what she said for a moment, however, taking his time to answer. Belonging. Truly feeling as if one was made for the other. Fitting together like two pieces of a puzzle. Being together for the rest of one's life. He had never thought something like that would ever be possible for someone like him. But she had posed the question and now he actually was thinking about it and trying to come up with the answer.

"I suppose it's because... I just don't believe in true love. The idea seems ridiculous. Eventually, you will get sick of someone who is your soulmate or special someone. Time, age, fading beauty and youth, ones physical health and body along with all the other things that go over the years eventually wear out the newness of something. It's... it's inevitable."

He shrugged but she could see she almost got through to him before he put another wall up.

"I know love isn't a fairytale or perfect, Billy. But nothing suggests love cannot be everlasting renewed on a day to day basis or kept young at heart. The body and beauty fades, yes this is true, but the feeling and connection doesn't have to. It can be constantly thrilling and fresh every day with the same partner long term if one keeps an open heart and mind. I guess it just depends on the people involved. Who we fall for..."

She sighed and looked down then back up at him this time catching his stare with a different look in it than what she was accustomed to seeing. He wasn't hungry he was direct. Being real with her and genuinely interested.

He almost nodded with her and it surprised even him. He simply hadn't met someone like that who could give him such sappy feelings or kindle in him emotions. He didn't do emotions. There was a reason but he would never tell her nor anyone else. A deep part of himself he would keep private and closed off forever that belonged solely to him.

Perhaps she sensed this and it made her sad, but there was nothing he could do about it. No one needed to know. It wasn't anyone's business but his own.

Thinking more on the differences and similarities between him and Romeo, he knew they were two different kinds of lovers and maybe that was the issue Mandy had with him. Billy was all pleasure and no passion. All need and no deeper feelings. All physical drive and no emotional connection. Sometimes, he was all take and no give and definitely instinct over letting his heart lead him.

Unless he felt the one in his arms or writhing underneath him was truly deserving of that, he wouldn't give more than his body to anyone and wouldn't ever say he was in love. It was possible Mandy could be... but he wouldn't know yet as they hadn't gotten that far for him to tell. It would take someone unlike anyone he had never before seen or known that could make him feel that spark. The connection that could knock him off his feet and make him want to give his whole world to someone.

Mandy couldn't be that one, he was sure of it, that's why he was fighting her so hard too in his own way and he knew that. She was lovely, smart, kind, and different from any of the other girls he had ever known so far in his lifetime. But was she something special enough to completely captivate him or make him want to committ to only one girl? Her looks were tying him up in knots inside, but he was fairly certain that was just because he was lusting for her. He couldn't possibly be falling and he refused to even allow that possibility in.

Based on his habits, once he set his sights on a girl to go all the way with he never backed down until he got what he wanted.

When turning to look at her once more and seeing how happy she seemed to be while discussing this subject, with him of all people, it made him forget some of his pain and sort of smile back at her with a legitimate smile.

He decided to put aside his intentions to get her out of those clothes and into his bed for a little while longer and give her theory she posited a chance. She could be the one. The soulmate. Who knew? He certainly didn't yet despite almost being positive she was just another notch for him. Maybe she could be the one to warm and thaw his icy heart and show him something different. Make him feel again. Make him whole again. For far too long he had been empty and in pain. Maybe she could change that. He was almost dying to find out.

He leaned in and actually paid attention this time, once more allowing her to show him the complete story and read it in plain modern English to help it be easier for him to understand, just like she had during the movie night. Once they got far enough into the story and all caught up for the new test and assignment that would be coming up, they made the flash cards together.

Surprisingly, his intent was so focused on her and the details of the textbook and test he actually hardly smoked more cigs out of his pack. He still had cigs left for another day and was quite impressed with himself to forget the urge to smoke every five minutes.

He was so engrossed in her and something else for once he hardly lit up more of them and actually devoted time to letting her teach him the information he would need to know to pass this Friday's upcoming test.

She even told him she might take him up on that date he wanted if he passed with at least a decent enough score and earned a passing grade. Even if it wasn't an A or a B. She told him she would take him to Benny's Burgers a local diner with amazing food for a milkshake or something to celebrate.

He had smiled at that. She was goading him into actually passing the

class to get something he badly wanted, ever the crafty girl he knew her to be.

Mandy had looked at him funny when he asked to have something he wanted even more from her instead. She glared thinking he was going to say something else. But what he asked for was that next kiss he had been wanting that he said he would take a while back. The one he said he would deliver to her at a time of his choosing while they were together.

Billy had never had the chance to go for it because of their off and on again games they were playing with one another. He decided that night that when he did go in for that kiss, he would give it to her random and light then heavy and deep when she least expected it. That he would give it to her stronger than he did that night outside her house.

She had turned so red and she attempted to laugh it off nervously but he meant it when he asked for it. Mandy hadn't said no, yet again, so he took that as a sign that she would let him so why not now?

Fuck the shake. He wanted those lips and he would have them now. He looked her deep into her eyes and licked his lips to wet them before moving in to claim what he felt had been a long time coming. It had been an obsession ever since he slowly and gently kissed her outside her house. This time he would do it right. This time it wouldn't be her first so as her lips knew his, there would be no need to be shy or hold back.

Leaning in and over her suddenly, he took her soft pale chin in his strong hands and then began tugging lightly on her pigtailed using them to tilt her head back for him. Slowly and very carefully so as not to frighten her. At first she was a bit startled and gasped at the feel of it. Her eyes sparkled and her breath caught in her throat. He looked down over her face for a few seconds assuring her it was okay with his calming blue eyes and wordlessly told her that he wouldn't ever hurt her. Then he moved his wanton mouth closer to hers slowly inch by inch teasing her yet again like before. She closed her eyes and as he got closer she shuddered awaiting the contact.

Not letting go of her hair he made her stay put as he took what he

had been wanting for a very long time now. His mouth slowly parted and moved hers open to lock her lips deliciously with his. This time his tongue moved deeper into her mouth past the barely parted seam of her sweet lips and tasted even more of her. His tongue danced lightly on hers until they moved together fluidly. She sighed into his kiss and surrendered completely to it feeling every sensation he was giving her.

"Mandy... I've wanted more of these lips of yours for so long. They feel so good on mine. So right. Please don't take them away anymore..."

He begged her in between kissing her hungrily and all she could do was nod against him as his mouth eagerly kept hers busy with his own. She moaned softly against his mouth making him stiffen up at the pleasure coursing through his body over the sounds she made.

Moaning softly back into her, his heart raced as he remembered how it was just like that night, only with even more intense passion than before. She was helpless underneath him as he worked her lips to perfection messaging them with his own so skilfully she couldn't help but respond back with her own. The timing matched up perfectly between them as he took what was his he rightfully claimed.

She shivered against him as he held her there not pulling away until he felt he had made his point loud and clear. He felt her body relax and meld into his and she even lifted her hands to automatically touch his powerful jaw and then carress his cheeks while they kissed endlessly.

She was completely silent and her eyelids heavy for what felt like an eternity of him pleasuring her mouth with his own. When he finally pulled away from her he saw that her expression was dazed as she struggled to catch her breath. He grinned and kissed her cheek and then a soft but needy trail down her neck just holding her there. He could hear her breathing had quickened and then heard it slow down over time as he kept her in his arms for the next twenty minutes.

Once they both came down from the high of the kiss, they snuggled together on the floor against his bed until she could collect her thoughts. When she was back to the present and in her right mind,

she blushed as she helped him continue to study and to her surprise, he actually allowed her to further the lesson she was trying to teach him.

When they had shared a few laughs over some of the characters shennigans or the perdicaments they found themselves in, he had asked her his questions which she was happy to answer and explain. Just like he did during the movie they watched together.

The more she showed him the closer he felt himself getting to her. Because of this she relaxed more with him until he could sense her finally opening up more to him. She even let him nuzzle into her and hold her while using the flash cards. He began to take pride in getting most of the flash card answers correctly because it felt like it was his reward. Being able to see her feel safe nestled in his arms and just allowing him to be near her. To simply be close to her.

It was different. He didn't have any normal interactions with girls from school or otherwise, not even when he was dating them, sleeping with them, pursuing them, or controlling them. This was a whole other experience to him but he actually found her company surprisingly peaceful and easy going.

He enjoyed their time together and all their issues with one another seemed to melt away in the peacefulness of his room as they spent time together. She calmed him in a way he couldn't describe. It felt like she controlled him but in a good way because he wasn't being as nearly pushy with her as he was with other girls. She helped him keep his head on straight and was helping him focus better as well.

Even so, as invested as he was in learning, in all of this it felt hard not to look at her body. Parts of her like her lips, her neck, her hands, her legs, and other parts of a woman he had always been attracted to. He gazed at her breasts and her soft looking belly and torso. Her body was unlike any other girl he had been with. She was a curvy girl, he had seen that well when she was in her bikini in the pool, but she was healthy and had those curves in all the right places. She had it all despite her layers seemingly make them appear to be absent or undefined.

He noticed she had very nice breasts, the perfect size and a proper



handful, not too big and not too small either. He tried to stifle his groans over his urge to cup and fondle them every time he looked at them while she was reading to him. He could find no flaw in her other than her lack of letting go and having fun or being more sexually receptive to him at times.

In addition to these things he also noticed her lovely green eyes, the slight V shape of her hairline that formed her widow's peak, and her lovely smile. How soft and full her lips were and the way the light in his room reflected in her eyes and danced on her thick silken black hair.

She finally let her hair down, literally, with him eventually and he ran his fingers through it as it cascaded over her shoulders. It was very long and soft all around her body and he loved the feel and smell of it taking small handfuls to breathe in the scent of it which made her laugh softly.

Seeing her like this, natural and happy instead of afraid or angry with him, it appeared to awaken something within him. Something he had started to feel before they drifted apart. It made something inside of him stir that he would have never guessed was there. Billy was pleasantly surprised that although she was not his usual type he was actually quite honestly attracted to her and taken with her.

He even began to get a bit nervous at times when speaking to her before the night was over which was highly unlike him. With other girls he was smooth and never missed a beat. But with her it felt almost wrong to keep trying those tactics on her. And in trying to just be natural with her he faltered because it was the first time in a long time he had been real with someone.

When they had said goodnight to one another she hugged him tightly for a few minutes and then actually leaned in and kissed his cheek. She was so innocent it made him instantly hard for her with an intense desire to find out just how innocent she actually was. Was it all an act? Could she be truly that pure? All the females he had ever chased after were fast and open. Had been ready willing and eager. But Mandy was definitely different. Closed off and careful. Shy and gentle. Soft and distant.

Waiting with him for a few minutes she eventually walked back over to her side of the street and unlocked her door. Turning back to him before opening it she took a few moments to watch him standing there. He thought he saw Mandy bite her lip and her expression fall for a second thinking maybe she was already missing him. His heart softly fluttered a bit at that taking him by surprise.

When she turned and went inside, Billy placed his hand on the spot where her warm lips had tenderly pressed onto his cheek and looked up at the sky as if to question why this was all happening and why now? He thought of Shakespear and Romeo and Juliet.

#### *Act 1 Scene 4*

*ROMEO*

*"I fear too early, for my mind misgives*

*Some consequence yet hanging in the stars*

*Shall bitterly begin his fearful date*

*With this night's revels, and expire the term*

*Of a despisèd life closed in my breast*

*By some vile forfeit of untimely death.*

*But he that hath the steerage of my course,*

*Direct my sail."*

It plagued him. Why now? Like Romeo, the stars came in and were intervening with his life and his best laid plans, throwing a wrench in everything as if setting him up for something.

He had been so devoid of emotion, fought all his life to drive them all out of his system, deprived of a tender touch for so long, and completely broken. Why did someone like her have to come into his life now after so much damage had already been done?

He shook his head and went inside trying to push these complex

burning questions out of his mind because if he didn't he would get no sleep tonight over it.

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Laying in bed after dinner with Neil, Susan, and Max, he thought about all of this as he looked up at the ceiling and sighed.

Although his plans were foiled about his move to try and get her to go all the way with him, just like it had been time and time again before denied, he surprisingly found had an amazing time with her. Just simply spending time with her and simply being. He could feel himself enjoying the tease and denial dance they were doing now instead of it hurting him. A part of him wanted to make it last a little while longer too. He wanted to see where this was all going.

In a weird way he actually felt like he was earning the right to be with her. Earning the right to almost court her and be in her company. Earning his right to find out what it would be like to have her should she ever allow him to. He wanted to show her he could earn his way into her good graces and that she could trust him to please her. It would be the ultimate reward for actually working hard for it instead of trying to tempt her into giving it, although he would still have fun trying. All the other girls were fast and easy but she would make him definitely work for it and he shocked himself that he truly wanted to.

He groaned and bit his lip thinking about how she felt under his wandering hands tonight and how good she smelled when he had nuzzled into her. He heard her softly moan in response to his actions and felt how her body had responded to him despite her protests. It excited him beyond anything he had ever experienced. The deep and much more intense kiss they shared had made him feel so high he thought he would never come down. Never before had he felt the likes of it with anyone else and it almost terrified him.

Right before going to sleep, his epiphany was that he actually enjoyed talking with her, going back and forth, and getting to know her as well as the things she was interested in. She also wanted to know him, that much was clear. He almost let deep things slip out to her and that just wasn't like him at all.

He wanted to see more of her because she offered him things no other girl had before. Friendship. Trust. Kindness. Patience. And, dare he even suggest, her asserting decent control over him when it came to his shameless flirting or trying to get into her pants. Actually succeeding in making him check himself enough to cool his jets and put on the brakes.

He was not in control as much as he thought he was with her around. She was holding the reins calling the shots and it amused him greatly. She knew just how to rope him in and make sure he was paying attention. In return for his cooperation, she was allowing him to touch her and get close in little ways although fumbling and awkward.

It was a different change of pace from his usual fun and games but positively amazing all the same. Just what was she doing to him to make him allow this to continue? Just when he thought he had the mysteries of females all figured out, this one was throwing him for a loop and he actually liked it even when it slightly frustrated him.

It wasn't so much about getting to score with her anymore and then leave her in the dust as it was a burning curiosity and a desire to know her. And to know just how far things were going to be taken and what would happen next between the two of them. If there could possibly be more. He honestly began feeling he could keep an open mind for that so long as she would no longer close down on him. He had to keep her happy, open, and aware of him so she would keep giving what she felt right to give to him. Her trust. Her communication. Her acceptance of him being so close to her.

He sighed while recalling their session and then switched off the light, her face and beautiful green eyes the last thing he saw before sleep claimed him. He couldn't wait to see her again, whenever that may be.

It actually puzzled him as to why but he fell asleep with her name in his mouth and the sound of her laugh and voice in his head that night. He truly did not wish to fight with her ever again. He actually feared losing her and that thought puzzled him until his eyes closed and all his thoughts shut down.

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## **18. Lover's Lake**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

**LOVER'S LAKE - TURN ABOUTS FAIR PLAY**

### **Summary:**

Mandy and Billy have a date tonight. Billy has laid a false claim on her as his "girl" after a fight with Tommy to keep him away from her. It's not true but its going around the school regardless much to Tucker's pain. Because of doing her this favor, Billy has bothered Mandy to pay up for him helping her by going on at least ONE date.

Mandy is determined to turn things around on him and make him desire her, then drop him and show him how it feels to be so hounded. She's tired of him teasing her. The tormenting has gone far enough.

Tonight she will show him two can play that game and resolves to have him begging for her making him feel every bit of desire that he has been making her feel, although she doesn't like to admit it. Lover's Lake seems like the perfect location. But will

**her plan go accordingly? Will things go too far and get out of her control?...**

.....

Mandy was seated in front of her vanity mirror and fixing herself up for the date that Billy had long pressured her into. She was styling her hair and preparing her makeup based on Nikki's beauty tips and what she had learned so far. A few times she paused into the mirror and frowned asking herself why she was doing this but either couldn't or didn't want to answer and take account of herself to none other than herself.

He wanted a date and he still wanted that next kiss he had somehow managed to get her to silently agree to. Quite simply, the only reason she had not denied him that was because she felt guilty over the fight he got into with Tommy over her. Even if it was his doing and not her own. Maybe a part of her felt he could have it if only in return for him putting an end to Tommy's unwanted attentions on her. She had half a mind to keep him waiting for it only to deny him of it when he would try. Another way to mess with his head out of petty revenge on him.

It was also because of that brutal showdown between the two of them, the one that almost got them both into detention if Mandy hadn't spoken up for him, that Billy had laid a "claim" on her once he was the undisputed victor of the knucklebusting brawl. He had made her say it out loud to Tommy to confirm it and drive the point home to him.

The whole thing was a sham. Like a protection order placed on her by Billy to simply keep all the other guys that were hounding her off of her back, especially Carol's ex boyfriend Tommy. Both her and Billy had seen clearly that he was stalking after Mandy way too often ever since school started up again. She couldn't help but think part of it was Billy's jealousy of not wanting another guy touching her let alone looking at her wrong. Simply a way to keep her safe while also keeping her off limits to all others so he could be the ONLY one to stalk her.

*Jesus. Instead of being prey to any guy in school now I'm practically prey*

*to one and on top of that, his property to coddle whenever he chooses. What the hell has happened in my life to make me slip this far down the rabbit hole and into this madness?*

Grumbling about it as she applied her eyeshadow she thought about all the people in school who were talking about them now. It seemed the silent arrangement had gotten out somehow despite no one really being in the hallway other than school security the day he took Tommy down a notch and forced his hand to stay away from her.

Billy had told her that he swore Tommy and Carol to secrecy but again, this was a small town. You can't really stop people from talking as things were usually so boring here rumors were the only way people really entertained themselves.

Mandy never wanted it to get around the school that they actually might be going steady together but she understood it had to so it would stick and Tommy would take the threat serious enough to keep away. The lie circulated, people whispered and talked about it, and Tommy had left her alone for a few weeks now. Sadly, Tucker had as well, because he was crushed by this sudden telephone game intel even if both she and Billy knew it wasn't even true.

And yet, here she was getting ready for him and accepting the date offer, if not only to make him squirm for her and then throw it in his face before the night was over leaving him with nothing to gain from it.

*Screw his protection. I don't need him. I'd happily take guys hounding me again just to be free of him constantly hovering over me and making me ride with him back and forth from school as if he owned me. Even if it meant I'd have to deal with Tommy.*

Bitterly these kinds of thoughts kept circling in her head even though she knew it wasn't rational for her to feel this way. The peace and quiet from Tommy and other rude boys had been nice... but at what price? Having to accept Billy shadowing her in place of them all almost everywhere she went. Even the library when trying to sit with her friends.

Be that as it may, tonight was the night. She finally said yes to him



finding a way to rebel and cause him distress in the process. He would be pissed but she didn't care. Tonight would be their "date night" and boy was she going to make it a night he wouldn't ever forget let alone never ask for a repeat of. The night of all nights that Billy had been hounding Mandy for since he saw her in her black bikini and that over the top sexy vampiress dress, as cheap as it had been to purchase.

Her current black dress she was wearing tonight had definitely not been cheap and with the way she looked in it, she knew it would get his blood running hot for her. She hoped he would drool himself dry over it and lose his mind.

If he wanted a date night, Mandy would give him a date night, and all the bells and whistles that came with it other than that one thing he clearly wanted from her. Sex. She would play the part of his beloved "tease" turning everything he had been doing to her around on him giving him a bitter taste of his own vicious, cruel, perverted, teasing nature.

Billy had called HER a tease and a flirt at Steve's pool party which had ignited a fury of a thousand suns within her at the audacity of his words. The nerve of him to say that to her of all people ignoring his own sexual deviancy. The irony of it all was astounding considering what he had been doing to her for months since the moment they laid eyes on each other.

It burned her up and made fire grace her pale high cheekbones, deinty considering the slight roundness to them, and her two green eyes blazed as royal emeralds set regally in the sockets of her porcelain China doll like face. Even angry she guessed she was somewhat attractive and maybe that's why he chased her so hard the more she got worked up over him.

Her long silky raven feathered hair had been wild after her shower and blow drying it, not yet tamed with her brush nor even styled. Fixing that she combed it and gave it some volume but kept it straight and long just the way he liked it.

Her lips stuck out in a rebellious angry pout as she thought about everything that had lead to this moment. She thought about him

asking her for another kiss just a few hours before the pool party and how she had passively wound up agreeing to it. She thought of how he tried to take it that night but she shut him down. Imagine... her kissing Billy Hargrove any more than she already had. She'd rather die first.

In case things went wrong Mandy told Nikki she would ask Billy to take them to Lover's Lake right by the waters edge at the pier just in case she didn't call her back within a few hours after it was all over. Her friend agreed to come bail her out if things went south. They wouldn't go south... and neither would Billy. Not if she could help it. She didn't ask that favor of her way too excited for her friend because she thought Billy was dangerous or would harm her. Nothing like that. But she didn't think he was above holding her hostage out there alone in the dark until he broke her down to give in to him.

He had been cornering her, stalking her, laying into her with his sexual affections and sneaky touches behind her desk, and tormenting her senseless for months now in school and out of it. Billy had especially kicked things up even more after he had cared for her in the aftermath of Tina's Halloween party and brought her home to watch over her. Whatever went down between them while she was drunk, it must have left a lasting impression on him to make him constantly pressure her to go out with him even harder than before.

He would ask, she would say no or give him nothing but silence ignoring him, then he would get angry and storm off just to be back to ask again trying to tempt her with his charming mannerisms. It was like he had only one cycle that he moved through and she was on the looping end of it.

She kept saying no but her answer fell on his deaf ears not deterring him in the slightest. She almost said yes the last time he asked in school during lunch at her sacred spot just to shut him up but she knew the consequences if she lied and didn't let him collect. Thankfully they were alone in the study room and no one overheard him asking her that time.

The next time he asked he had been more bold to do it right in public in the cafeteria, with even Tucker and her friends sitting right there! That was a fun day. She had practically been oh so dangerously close

to grinding her lunch into his face with how persistent and annoying he was being about it. His pretty and flirtatious smile making her turn six shades of red in front of the whole cafeteria and pissing Tucker off so bad he looked like he was going to get up and tell him off. She had to pull Billy aside away from them and talk to him in the hall giving her answer there. He still smiled at her even though she told him no yet again.

It finally all built up until she could take it no longer and she wanted to either make it so horrible he would leave her alone or make it so unforgettable he would be the one to shy away from her for coming on too strong. If there was one thing she knew about Billy it was that he didn't do feelings very well and didn't get hooked on any of the girls he took out. He wasn't into romance or love so if she used the L word maybe it would scare him straight off of her. If he started falling and feeling for her maybe it would make him push himself away to let her be finally giving her peace and quiet from him for once.

She wasn't sure what the night held in store for her with him but she had grown tired of his games and always being on the attack with her constantly being on the defense. She nodded to herself in the mirror and was ready for this. If Billy wanted a tease... then he was about to get one. A sexy, shameless, over the top, no holds barred, unmerciful tease.

Looking at herself in the mirror and admiring her curvy body in nothing but her black bra and panties she ran her fingers through her long dark thick hair like a comb. She made sure she would be wearing something positively sinful, at Nikki's advice and insistence. They had both picked it out together in the Starcourt Mall just a few days ago when Billy had made it clear he wanted the date that was owed to him.

She ran her hands along the ridiculously sexy "little black dress" and admired the off the shoulder style babydoll sleeves that exposed her neck, collarbone, chest and her soft well rounded shoulders. Mandy zipped herself up all the way in the back but it was a struggle to do so.

Finally she got it and saw how zipping it made the front less slack

going tighter to show off her pale cleavage for him to feast his eyes on. Despite the front style of it, the dress still left plenty of skin showing on her back but tapered down into a V just above where her dimples would be along her lower spine. The bra she had chosen made her breasts raise up even more than they would without it and that would give Billy an eyeful when he was facing her.

No more teasing from him. No more backing her into a corner. No more making her feel small and like his plaything or prey. Tonight, Billy would get a taste of his own overpowering medicine and she would lay it on thick until he would have enough of her and run away screaming when he would see her in school. She hoped.

Looking to her makeup she had on that Nikki helped her pick out for tonight she was determined to make him eat his words or get the full effect of them until he couldn't handle her anymore. When Mandy had finally opened up and told Nikki about the "date" and had begged her not to say a word to anyone, she had taken her under her wing and taught her all the secrets and tips she knew for hair care and a slight makeup tutorial. Nikki wanted Mandy to knock the denim off of Billy when he picked her up.

Mandy put on her soft toned red lipstick just the way Nikki had taught her during their practice tutorial after shopping for the right outfit at Lovelace in Starcourt Mall. She was careful around her cupid's bow and worked slowly so as not to go over the lines of her lips by too big of a margin.

Raising the mascara to her lashes she fluffed them up one last time and curled the brush layering on a light coating just enough to make them appear longer, fuller, thicker. Like Billy's only his were all natural and even more gorgeous than any mascara could do for someone.

*No. Stop thinking about him. FOCUS.*

Her eyeshadow was the last part and she made sure not to put too much on aggressively but to lightly brush it over her lovely eyelids in gentle soft strokes. She made an almost egyptian like curving edge off the outer corners of her eyes and they sparkled as she sat at her vanity mirror taking in the once pale and bare geeky face that was

now transformed into the face of a dark goddess.

Mandy never cared much for her features, nor did she think of herself as worthy of makeup, but tonight she felt positively sinful and unlike her mousey usual self. Tonight she was in charge and was going to show Billy how it felt to feel so out of control and tortured he wouldn't know what to do with himself. She was going to play with him big time and make him be the one to gasp and choke up for her.

She didn't know exactly where he wanted to take her but that wouldn't matter. She had plans. She had a location. And if he had it his way taking her anywhere else, she had a feeling that most male heads would be turning in her direction and it would make Billy absolutely more possessive than usual with rage and possibly start a fight. She didn't want that really. She wanted to be alone with him with all his attention solely on her.

It wasn't fair that he had a new flavor of girl almost everyday while making Mandy watch him kiss, touch, fondle, and take off with them, and then come hounding after her trying to put her in the lineup. Then when done with his other skirts he chased, Billy still had the nerve to flirt with her and act like he was interested only in her. Especially Tina and how he would sometimes give her a lift letting her ride up front in his car while she was told to get in the back having to watch their entire exchange. He knew what he was doing when he did that.

She had guessed pretty accurately that he did this to make her feel desire towards him. To feel like he was something so special that she just absolutely had to have him. But tonight, he would desire her, and she would tease HIM this time around not giving him an inch to play. If he choked on his gum tonight because of her she would have to laugh for a few seconds before calling 911 to save his life. A mean thought, sure, but he had to learn his lesson that she was not to be messed with.

Mandy kissed her reflection and grinned feeling positively evil. She would make him feel every bit of the need and urgency for her as she had secretly been feeling for him for weeks while holding him at arm's length. A longing that was getting out of control, unspoken between the two of them, out of more than just fear of falling and

being burned.

It was a longing that she knew he would take from her and run away with it and it was as fragile as her heart almost like glass. She knew that if he ever got a hold of it he would drop it shattering it into a million pieces. She had vowed that in all their exchanges she would never let him get his clumsy rough hands on that special part of her that he could just break. Well, two special parts. Her heart and her purity.

It had been the reason she had shyed away from him for so long. Always running and him giving chase only to wind up making him angry when he could not catch her like he did the others. But tonight, she would push him as far as she could to make him feel the sting of that need and those unrequited emotions, then leave him put out begging for more or finally giving up. Someone had to put him into his place and show him how it felt when he did to women what he did. His cruel games broke a thousand hearts but hers was the one he could never break because she would not let him have access to it.

This was very unlike her but the rage in his carelessness of her emotions and how he left her dangling right on the edge had finally spilled over its limit leaving her feeling slightly vindictive. Where she planned to have them go tonight, he would eat out of the palm of her hand and not be satisfied or filled with what she would give to him, that much she was certain. The player would be played. The trickster tricked. Tonight was the night.

She sat on the edge of her chair and rolled up her fishnet tights pulling them all the way up to her waist, her black silken thong like panties snug beneath them. He would not be able to get his hands or fingers anywhere near that area no matter how hard he tried despite the thin layers guarding it. Slipping on her black high heels strapping them around her ankle she took a few more moments to go over her makeup one last time to make sure it was perfect.

She would now play the part of the good girl gone bad and make his head spin. There was no way he would be prepared for her when he came to pick her up. She thanked the entire void of the heavens above that her parents were not home to see she had chosen this outfit or makeup.

The "date" he had spent with her previously in her home and at Steve's party was child's play compared to how this one would be. She felt more adult and mature looking at her reflection. No longer the scared shy little girl in a woman's body like before. Tonight she was every inch a lady but with a naughty twist that she was sure would leave him begging for more before the night was through.

Mandy heard the sound of his car as it backed out of his driveway and turned around to face her side of the street. Her window was open so she could hear the open and shut sound of his Camaro's door and his footsteps on the pavement signaling he would soon be approaching the front door. He had no idea she was dolled up like this and most likely expected her to be in her usual semi cute nerdy style of clothing like before if not a more tame looking evening dress. This one would knock his boots off.

Blowing a kiss into her mirror and practicing her winks and her smile she grabbed her matching black purse from her coat rack, more an accessory with nothing inside it other than her school I.D., and as soon as the doorbell rang she took a deep breath and shut and locked her bedroom window before leaving her room.

The doorbell rang a few more times, he was getting impatient obviously, as she was walking down the stairs and she sighed at him. Before she opened the front door she had to control herself and stop shaking. Confidence is what she would secrete tonight. Total confidence. This was "bad girl" Mandy, a whole new breed from her previous incarnation, and she wouldn't let him shake her tonight of all nights.

Unlocking and opening the door slowly she prepared herself for the sight of him most likely dressed in something super sexy in his usual style and she kept her gaze calm. He turned to take one look at her and his mouth had practically dropped to the ground, his eyes drinking her in completely, and his shocked expression worth every minute she had endured to get ready for him.

"I'm... sorry... I uhh... I think I have the wrong... house. I'm looking for a rabbit named Mandy. Have you seen her?"

He was almost breathless with his comment as he stood there with

his hands in his pocket, clearly loving her new look so much that it appeared his heart would stop. She noted he was also keeping his distance and not getting up in her personal space like he normally did. She grinned over this change from his usual posture and personality.

"Sorry, no rabbit here. But I'll be happy to take her place if you'd like."

Her playful smile and curve of her red juicy lips made his heart flutter slightly and he had no idea what to do.

He seemed frozen on the front porch unable to move or process her words. She laughed softly and looked into his beautiful blue eyes searching for any trace that she was successfully making him come undone for her.

It was definitely working because he accidentally knocked into one of her mother's potted plants that hung over the frame of the front porch awning and was stuttering to himself cursing under his breath as he tried to steady it. He had bumped his head right into it while trying to be smooth with her but failing miserably.

"I don't... uhhh... I... shit. Sorry. I didn't mean... to." He was at a loss of words and aside from struggling with the plant he was unable to keep his eyes off of her.

Once he figured it out and steadied the plant from swinging, his long lashes lowered as his eyes looked her up and down admiring the gorgeous dress and how it hugged all of her curves just right. He didn't miss a beat and spared no expense at checking out her breasts and the cleavage that the dress helped form between them. Mandy would go so far as to say she was a C cup in measurements at best but the bra and dress definitely made them swell slightly larger making them even more supple and appear more full than usual increasing that measurement slightly.

"Let's go, Hargrove. Or our night will be done before it's even begun." She stared him down smirking and took his large hand in hers after locking up the front door.



She was leading him to his car as he stumbled to keep up behind her most likely slowing only to keep checking out her juicy bottom in the dress as she walked confidently to the curb, her hips slightly swaying and the short cut of the dress showing off the back of her upper thighs just below her cheeks as well as her fishnets. The tights made her legs look longer and more shapely than usual and he was thumbing his lower lip while checking her out from the back feeling himself getting excited already.

When they reached his car, she dropped his hand leaving him on his side to head over to the passenger side and simply stood there waiting. Billy was leaned up against the driver side of his car grinning like an idiot. In all his eagerness to take in everything about her, her body, her dress, her makeup, and get a long lasting mental image of her most likely for later on in his room, he had forgotten the most basic of things for getting there. He wasn't even budging to unlock the car and to let them in so they could leave.

Once he caught onto it and remembered himself and the car being needed to go places with her, he cursed again under his breath and walked around to her side. He was struggling with his keys to unlock the door and open it for her. When he finally succeeded he ran his hands nervously through his thick golden curls and almost appeared to be blushing as he opened her door.

Mandy gave a soft laugh, thanked him for being a gentleman, and got inside. She made herself comfortable and put her seatbelt on. If the dress was riding her thighs before, it was doing so even more now that she was sitting. She tugged at it nervously before he got into the car but reminded herself not to be skittish or shy and let things be.

Billy was a mess as he jogged back over to the driver's side and got in to take his seat and buckle up. Shutting the door he was shaking his head and smirking to himself as he placed the key into the ignition and finally started it up. He was still looking at her while the engine ran, her long graceful legs webbed in fishnet, letting his gazed trail up from her heels and ankles, up past her knees, past her curvy yet toned thighs, over the curve of her breasts as they rose and fell from her breathing, finally resting on her face. His engine was idling for a few minutes and finally she said something and checked on him. He was absolutely beside himself.

"Billy." Mandy said softly and waited. She had to say it a few more times before he actually remembered that they were still sitting in a running car and he snapped out of it to look her in the eyes.

"Yes?" He replied while still staring hungrily at her. His tongue was barely sticking out from between his lips and when it went back inside his mouth she giggled.

"Are we going? As much as I love sitting here with you like this... maybe we should drive now if we're going to make it to where I want us to go by sunset?"

She smiled a wicked and dazzling smile at him and he was finally shaken out of his state of lustful diversion getting his head back in the game.

"Oh, yeah. Right. Sorry."

It was the first time she had ever heard him apologize to her for anything. He must be in dreamland because normally he would just make a snappy comeback about not letting people boss him around or give a flirty line to silence her.

She couldn't help but feel another playful laugh bubbling up inside of her but she tried to keep it in check. Seeing him be so nervous was absolutely thrilling but she didn't want to make him feel embarrassed or shred all of his dignity in one night on their first hour out together. It had only been about ten minutes and he was already getting lost in her unable to navigate himself smoothly around like he usually did.

"Did you want to go see a movie? Maybe go to dinner? Or..."

He was trying to please and impress her with tame activities he thought she would like even if he didn't share the same tastes. She knew his tastes. Bars. Clubs. Parties. Or making out alone in dark secret places in his car.

The dinner wouldn't be ideal because then they wouldn't be alone for her to tease and torment him. The movie theatre had potential because they would be side by side in the dark with plenty of ways

she could put her hands on him to drive him crazy without him being able to do much. That was still on her bucket list of places to tease Billy, but as tempting as it was, she knew they needed more privacy for what she had planned.

"No. Let's go to Lover's Lake, Hargrove."

He practically snapped his neck to turn and look at her. His mouth was in a small O and hanging open. He was not expecting that one bit.

Complete surprise registered on his face when she had said that to him. He had tried to take her there weeks ago but she had declined knowing exactly what teenagers did together at Lover's Lake. But now, it would be the perfect place for her to seduce him, put him in his place and then leave him wanting. They would be alone in the dark and in his car. A scenario he had always wanted with her and had most likely rehearsed in his head thousands of times. Every touch would be calculated on his part. Every word and every action.

But with him being this nervous she doubted he would make the first move and if he tried, she would shut him down, and then take control. She wanted his ordinarily organized world to be thrown into utter chaos like hers had been ever since he came into it. Wanted him to want her as bad as she had been wanting him but this time she **WOULD** play the tease he accused her often of being.

"Sounds... great. Mind if I stop and get a six pack before we head out? In case I want to drink. You're welcome to have some too, sexy."

Hearing him call her that was way too weird. It was the first time anyone had used that word to describe her. Still, it was better than calling her 'rabbit', or 'tease', or 'princess'.

He asked her while smiling from ear to ear playing the part of a complete gentleman despite his wide eager mouth giving him away. She had imagined he wouldn't share his beer with anyone but here he was offering it to her. After the Halloween party at Tina's the thought of drinking made her feel somewhat sick. She had learned her lesson. It just wasn't for her. Maybe a small glass of wine from time to time but no hard stuff. She was done with that for good.

He looked at her with such longing in his eyes barely masked by his lust and pent up need. He was most likely thinking this was it. That he would get lucky tonight and take her all the way. Mandy smirked at him and nodded enjoying the victory of seeing him get all twisted up over her.

This was going to be a night to remember for both of them, no matter who was the victor or the sore loser. She knew she would still have fun with him whether he got angry or not. He deserved it for all the moments he had made her feel knotted in her stomach over him and then leaving her high and dry out of frustration of her saying no to his sexual appetites.

Pulling into a gas station just a few minutes after driving down Old Cherry Road, she sat patiently as he told her he would be right back. He got out and practically ran into the store to hurry, which told her he was definitely anticipating getting his hands and lips all over her and expecting even more.

*Fuck. Fuck. Oh, God, okay. Keep calm, Mandy. You've got this. Nothing will happen without your say so. You know he stops when you push him away hard enough and doesn't force things. Everything will be alright. Breathe. Just breathe.*

She coached herself and tried to stay calm as he wandered the store for a bit checking the freezer isles then finally grabbing his beer and paying the female cashier. Mandy watched preparing to get slightly upset if he flirted with her. Not jealous, she told herself, just annoyed.

As she watched she saw the cashier was an attractive female flirting with him completely. To her total surprise, she noticed he barely paid her any attention even with her coming on to him heavily and wasted no time getting his change then coming back out to her.

*Did he just?...*

She marveled in how he passed up a perfect opportunity to flirt or get a phone number. Wow.

On another note, he was buying beer by himself? How he managed to

buy alcohol being way under the legal age of twenty one was beyond her but she guessed the bad boy that he was meant that he most likely had a convincing fake I.D.

His purchase put in a bag by the nervously shot down cashier and he walked out seemingly as though he were on top of the world. It was the happiest she had ever seen him in months, unless he was arguing with her or Neil, and she was also happy for him. He seemed so different tonight. So at ease with her despite his nerves being shot when looking at her.

Opening the door he put his bag behind his seat in the back and climbed in shutting the door. He tapped on the steering wheel darting his tongue in and out of his mouth listening to music inside his head she imagined only he could hear at the moment.

He looked over to her and grinned wiggling his tongue at her out of the side of his mouth and she laughed making him even more content. This was a side of Billy she had never seen. He truly was in a great mood and excited. It felt wrong somehow, considering her motives for tonight, but she liked it regardless.

Seeing him be so high on himself because of being with her it almost made her feel guilty to know she was planning on putting him through the sexual gauntlet and would be toying with his emotions and body tonight.

She would also be messing with his mind since he liked mind games so much. But she had long decided that this had been a long time coming. He needed to know how it felt. And apparently, by the way he responded to her appearance, she was the girl to do it to him tonight.

She never thought this would happen. To be knocking Billy Hargrove down a peg and make him realize that it hurts when someone wants something and can't have it. What she wanted was for him to treat her with respect instead of a side option to pick up whenever he pleased. If he couldn't do that then she simply wanted him to leave her alone completely.

"Alright. Next stop, Lover's Lake, my princess. Buckle up because I'm

going to show you what this baby can do."

He had said it with such pride that it made her grin although she was frightened at what he might be capable when driving fast with her. Normally she hated fast cars but she somewhat trusted Billy to be an experienced safe driver. It did make her nervous though. She had hoped he didn't mean he was going to be a speed demon. She swallowed nervously a bit and checked to make sure her seatbelt was on securely.

He grinned and started the Camaro stepping on the gas pedal a few times revving it and making it purr and roar. It was loudly coming to life but under his complete control. The cashier from earlier looked out the window as her head snapped in the direction of the loud noise. He laughed then turned around behind his seat forsaking the rearview mirror so he could see better behind him as he drove it in reverse.

Once he was clear to drive forward he peeled out of the gas station lot spinning his tires showing off. The girl from inside the gas station was swooning and impressed but looked jealous and cross at Mandy sitting in the car with him. She guessed this girl was wishing she could be in her spot tonight. For a split second, Mandy almost did too.

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About almost a half an hour later driving down long dark country roads far from the main city of Hawkins, Billy struck up conversation with her as the soft hum of his stereo played a few of his favorite songs on tape. Mandy was relaxed as ever while he handled taking the road by storm skillfully despite going slightly above the speed limit.

"So... what made you change your mind? I mean... why did you say yes? You've only been knocking me down every time I asked you out, Mandy."

He asked with his eyes focused on the dark roads, the lit up roadsigns that flew by them, and the dotted line separating the two sides of the asphalt lanes as they drove on to their destination.

The atmosphere was dreamlike to her. She almost wanted to pinch herself just to be sure all of this was really happening. So many times she had dreamed of him and this felt like one but waking logic and the rules of the real world ruled here so it couldn't be in her mind.

Mandy was looking out the window and suddenly realized he was speaking to her turning her head to give him a serious look with a soft smile.

He was starting to get suspicious. She had to think of a good reason fast and distract him before he figured out in his head what she was doing. Turning on the charm she looked over at him and when he saw her making eye contact she softly winked at him. He looked at her for a moment as if she wasn't being herself but at the same time slightly enjoying the change.

"I guess I just felt I owed you one for all you've done for me. Helping get Tommy off my back. Making Carol stop her rude comments to me along with her friends. Taking care of me the night of the Halloween party. It seemed like the least I could do instead of being so mean to you and ignoring you all the time.."

Boy, she was really putting on the act. Her lips were pouted, her smile gorgeous when she shared it, and her body language being like liquid as she moved her arm to place her hand on his inner thigh. She gave it a gentle squeeze and began tickling his leg over the denim with her fingers. He groaned and shifted the car picking up the pace clearly liking what she was doing. He was eager to arrive at Lover's Lake as fast as he could without getting them both killed or pulled over.

"Really. Well... then so this is a pity date? For feeling bad about being so cold to me all the time? And here I was thinking you just really liked me, Hawkins. I'm sort of disappointed."

He asked seemingly getting a bit more upset but giving a soft smirk to hide it. Half angry. Half joking. His signals and body language, the tone of his voice, everything was all mixed up so she was having trouble figuring out if he was messing with her or truly meant it. It seemed to her his formerly happy self was deflating a tad bit by thinking she was doing this as a way of saying sorry to him over their

back and forth arguments.

"No. No, not at all. This is just my way of thanking you for being there for me. I thought it over and I realized that I really did want to go out with you after all and was just being stubborn and afraid. I decided it was time I stopped hiding from my real feelings, I suppose."

That got him. Then mentioning of 'feelings'. He nodded solemnly thinking on that for a minute. She had worded it perfectly to show her desire for him but also making it sickeningly sweet in a way she knew would turn him off if she kept talking about the one thing he didn't deal in.

"Okay. I guess I can go with that. A simple thank you would have been fine but if you want to be alone with me at Lover's Lake and thank me in other ways, I won't stop you from that. I'm looking forward to it, rabbit."

Thank him in other ways. Damn it, he was going there with it. He took an innocent loving comment and explanation and once more found a way to pervert it into a sexual thing. She hid her frown on the inside and redoubled her efforts having to go with the direction he took.

"I'm sure we could... figure something out. Yes. I'm open to... suggestions."

Mandy smiled and reached over to play with his golden curls around his ear and twist her fingers in them gently. He smiled still looking at the road but obviously loved the feel of her playing with his hair. If he wanted it to go the tease and deny sexual route instead of the romantic feelings scare tactic route then she could do either or and still make him stop wanting her.

As they drove he was speeding expertly around corners and windy roads and had even turned down the music so he could hear her in case she spoke to him. Looking over and sensing her unease at the silence having an opposite effect, he put on some soft rock music taking it slower around the tight turns and just cruising.



Mandy sat looking out the window watching the sun begin to sink down completely and allowing night to have her turn with the world. The beautiful Indiana sunset was illuminating the sky with brilliant orange, red, yellow, and pink colors in the clouds giving way to a perfectly clear and dark starry night. All the stars were singing to be sparkling so bright and free for every eye to see.

In between licking his lips and driving while enjoying the music, Billy was taking small peeks at her to gauge how she was doing. He was occasionally stealing his flirty glances at her when she looked out of the corner of her eye and despite his need to keep his attention on the road she could tell he had trouble keeping his eyes off of her curves and onto the curves of the highway.

She had to hand it to Billy, it was a very smooth ride. Dangerous but powerful and exciting. A few times he sped up on small sloping hilly back roads to make her stomach drop and she would playfully slap his shoulder and carress his cheek. He felt her warming up to him when she rested her hand often on his thigh and looked at him with her gorgeous red lips in a flirty yet innocent smile.

Billy was happy thinking maybe she was finally coming around to seeing things his way and actually enjoying his company for once. But would she keep her words earlier when she said she had wanted to come up with a way to thank him tonight?

Every chance he could he looked over to take in everything about her. Her posture was confident and relaxed instead of being crammed over into the far corner of the passenger side like she usually did when he drove her. Those days had been aggressive and filled with angst and tension between them so this was surprisingly a warm welcome change.

Billy felt that was surely a good sign and he got frustrated whenever he had to tear his eyes away from her sensual form and look at the road beyond his steering wheel. He was feeling eager to try and peel that dress off of her and rock her world at the lake. But would she let him? All her body signals pointed to yes but sometimes her face showed a small nervous expression on it although she hid it from him well.

His impatience was clearly on display for her when he pressed his foot harder into the gas pedal and he gained speed, taking the turns like a pro. He was hurrying to their destination now and she could guess why.

Lover's Lake was the stuff of legends for young lovers and suggesting it most likely turned him on for her feeling he was going to get her where he had always wanted her. Underneath him and at his complete mercy.

Mandy noticed while looking around his car to pass the time as they drove and saw that he had some spare blankets and a few pillows in the backseat. She assumed the worst for it but tried to hide her ire at seeing it. She knew why he would have such things in his car because she knew how he was and what he did. It almost pained her to know that but she pushed it aside telling herself tonight would be good enough payback.

"So... you living in your car now, Hargrove?"

Why did she use his last name? So stupid. She needed to make him believe she was more comfortable and be less formal with him!

She tried to make light of it, but she was fishing to see if there were ulterior motives for him having the bedding back there and if it had anything to do with her and their night tonight. She could imagine exactly what it would be used for if Billy got his way with her after all. Something she could not let happen under any circumstances.

If it was a more innocent thing, the blankets were there because he had plans to simply stargaze with her while drinking a little bit. Hopefully he would get so drunk he wouldn't be able to make proper unfair moves on her and cloud her judgement or talk her into having sex with him. It would make her seducing him with no intent of finishing him off even easier.

He looked taken aback almost angry at her question but was still distracted with her lovely body and legs driving in silence for a moment before he answered. He was trying to act tough and be his usual charming self at the same time, a feat she guessed only he was capable of, but she noticed he wasn't blasting his stereo anymore. He

also wasn't smiling as much as he usually did. His winking habits had also lessened. It seemed to Mandy he was having trouble being his macho flirtatious self around her. Or had he figured her out and the jig was finally up?

"No. I keep those there in case I need them, though. For... reasons."

He looked at her up and down and gave a cocky grin. There was the Billy she knew. She let out a soft sigh of relief that he was still interested. She had to keep him interested for a little while longer.

He had said it the way he did because she knew he was seeding thoughts and images in her head of him using it on his dates with other girls while doing god knows what in his car with them. His full intention to try and get a rise out of her and make her jealous. Well, it wouldn't work this time.

"I see. Well, I mean... if they're clean maybe we can use them at the lake and get comfortable and look at some stars tonight."

She said this while placing her hand on his thigh again but this time feeling up the denim jeans closer to his groin. His mouth popped open for a bit and she heard a soft groan escape his lips at her touch.

"They won't be clean very long when we arrive if you keep getting me all worked up like this."

His growled out sex-laced response while stifling some of his noises to hide his eagerness made her heart drop in her stomach. He was clearly getting hot for her and she was the one doing it. She was making all the moves. For a moment she lost her nerve and almost removed her hand from his inner thigh, her hand beginning to tremble as she forced herself to keep it there. If he noticed, he didn't say anything.

*Confidence, Mandy. You can do this. Make him want you so, so, bad!*

She reminded herself not to be afraid to touch him or make him have sexual thoughts about her. Billy was all about having his hands all over a girls anatomy so tonight she would be doing that to him instead and not let him touch her unless he would beg her for it.

Little teasing touches and light flirting to get under his skin as much as he had gotten under hers. Billy had looked at her and thought to himself he would definitely give her stars if that's what she wanted.

He tried to ignore the feel of her carressing him and to play indifferent while keeping his eyes on the road but she had heard his response to her placing her hand there and rubbing him softly. She could practically see the sweat begin to form on his hands, forehead, and the steering wheel from his excitement.

His body tempature even felt like it was heating up next to her and the Camaros windows were beginning to fog a bit due to the cold night air mixing with their body heat sitting inside the cab windows up. He rolled down his window to allow cool air to move inside the vehicle and lessen some of the fog on the windshield. He also turned the defrosters on to help speed it up. She smiled at him trying to hide how even physically hot he was getting over her.

Moving her hand to his knee and tracing her fingertips on it for a moment she got bold and slid it up his thigh slowly almost towards his zipper. She felt him pick up speed again being extremely urgent to get where they were going. It was at that moment she knew she had him where she wanted him for a change. Eager. Horny. Going wild. Too easy. The loverboy was going to be begging her for more only to be turned down and miserable. Maybe even angry.

If he left her there she had her back up plan of Nikki coming out to get her if she didn't call her to let her know she was home. Nikki didn't know her full plan only that it was arranged just in case for safety reasons. She would not be stuck out here just because he got his zipper going and then she denied him making him speed off without her. It was vindictive yes, but she wanted him to want her back and feel what she felt.

"Well... someone's very grabby tonight. Easy there, cupcake, I might just pull over right now and return the favor before we even park and get the blankets out."

He said in attempts at shocking her. He was trying to maintain control not willing to hand it over to her while trying to keep his own composure. She laughed softly and squeezed his inner thigh in

response making him draw out a breath she clearly could hear and see with the cold night air. His struggle was on full display now as he drove into the entrance of the park that housed Lover's Lake.

It was dark and peaceful there with the sounds of crickets, frogs, and cicadas as Mandy leaned her head out of the window she had rolled down. She wanted to let her hair blow about her face neck and shoulders freely adding to her look to make him crazy for her. It worked and he definitely noticed her wild long tresses flowing all about her fair face.

She was intentionally ignoring him and his flirty comments and withdrew her hands from his inner thigh softly laughed at his response of seeing her like this. He was normally aggressive and overbearing but tonight he was rather tame as a puppy dog trying to give her that 'charmer Billy' personality that he felt would get him laid. But in his eyes was torment and deliberation almost as if he were trying to read her and block out his need of her touch or to have his hands and mouth all over her.

Oh how wrong he was about getting what she knew he was after. What he had been after for months since he first saw her that morning. She wondered just how far she could tease him before he would snap and try to take control going for it anyway. If he did that, there was no getting out of it, unless she outed herself about the game she was playing with him and demanded to go home.

She knew she would not be able to overpower him. It would be so easy for him to take what he wanted. She would have to find a way to excuse her behavior and cool him off if he got too hot and bothered over her then find a way to make him take her home. She doubted he would, however, until he was done getting all the mileage out of her he could much like his ride.

Billy parked the car and unbuckled his seatbelt quickly trying to come over to her side of the car. She tensed a bit waiting for him to pounce. He never did but noticed her reaction to him coming over halfway. Damn it. Damn her for being so easy to read sometimes. He looked like he wanted to lean in and kiss her right there regardless if she was ready or not.

They sat in silence for a few seconds as the tension was rising but nothing happened. Then he broke the silence and her expectation of him behaving himself. He tried to lean in the rest of the way to touch her face and steal a kiss from her but she placed a finger to his lips when he neared her side of the car. He sat there frozen against her finger confusion knitting his handsome eyebrows and forehead. God, she loved looking at him sometimes, despite how she felt about him.

"Billy, not here. Let's go put those blankets down and lay by the lake. I'd love to be under the stars with you."

She said smiling at him as her little finger held so much stopping power over him while it was pressed to his deliciously curved lips preventing him from getting closer.

He wanted to be all hands on her tonight but she was making him wait for it. She could feel him shift in his seat as if his jeans were getting unbearably tight and she could only imagine what thoughts were running through his head and what she was doing to his body.

"Whatever you say, sweetheart. I'll show you some stars before the nights over, kitten."

He wiggled his eyebrows at her and removed himself from her finger to get out of the car. Before getting out he looked back and shot her a heartbreaker's smile flashing his perfect teeth, canines and all, at her still sitting inside the Camaro. He was still trying to be the one to make all the moves and sweet talk her with his use of pet names being his way of trying to get her hot under the collar or mad at him. But tonight was Mandy's night to be in control. She would dictate what would happen on this date, not him.

He fished for a smoke and then lit up a cigarette outside while looking around. He was most likely checking to see if any others were parked around the lake besides them. Being content to see and hear no one else tonight he grinned and took a long drag.

Satisfied they were in the clear, he turned around and grabbed the pillows and the assortment of blankets from the back along with his bagged six pack and put them on the hood of his car. Billy cracked open a can while enjoying his cancer stick and drank a little bit while

looking out at the lake quietly letting her take her time to come out. It didn't take him long to finish the can before he set it down on a random log for later.

The way his cigarette sat tucked between his lips and dangling there made her blush. It was always easy for him to draw her attention to his perfect mouth. She almost felt sorry for not letting him kiss her in the car but hoping he had his usual favorite flavor of gum with him.

Mandy finally opened her door and as she climbed out he was looking at her lovely stems all clad in fishnets enjoying the view immensely. He was definitely checking out her ass while she rose out of the seat and shut the door behind her walking over to the bedding he brought out.

Taking another drag of his cigarette and flipping his zippo lighter fidgeting with it she could tell he was slightly nervous despite his attempts to look calm and collected. He was hiding it well but she could see the cracks in his self control beginning to crumble. He was admiring her body and the dress most likely picturing himself slipping her out of it.

She was looking all around the darkened rather large area surrounded by all the trees and nature stopping to admire the stars and the moon as their reflections lit up the lake in the center. It was a perfect night for viewing and it would give her the excuse she needed to lay beside him on the blankets.

Getting a better look at the lake in the center she noted it really was shaped like a heart. She could even tell from where they stood despite how close they were to the waters edge. That was how it got its notorious name. Lover's Lake was a peaceful place where people went often to be undisturbed while enjoying romantic time with their partners or to be undisturbed while having sex with their hook ups. It just depended on the nature of the beast she supposed.

She had guessed Billy had been here often with hookups and nothing more serious she could bet. He seemed to know the grounds well enough as he kicked little pebbles around and walked along the edge of the lake while smoking. He was even pointing out random things to her to impress her but giving himself away that he had been here

long before he brought her with him.

Watching him closely and seeing he was still trying to play it casual and distant, she took it upon herself to setup the blankets ignoring him while he was trying to ignore her after a it got silent and still between them. She grabbed the blankets and gave them a short sniff test which made him roll his eyes at her for a moment when he saw her doing it. He had looked back from chilling on the log to see what was taking her so long and saw her checking them out. He dropped his cigarette and ground it out with his black leather boot and looked mildly offended.

"They're clean, I swear. I'm not a complete animal. Fuck's sake."

He snarked it out lightly but chuckled softly at her afterwards while playing with his lighter again and then deciding to fish out some of his gum. He most likely didn't want to smell and taste like cigarettes and beer in case they wound up making out while getting close. She shrugged making like his words didn't phase her.

The blankets smelled clean true to his word. There was a slight hint of detergent but it was light compared to the smell of him masking over it. He had tried to play it like he had been using it for his dates with other girls but no other smell but him and soap was on it so maybe she had hit the mark when she guessed he was truly sleeping in his car. She felt bad in that second because she knew how bad things could get at his house with Neil. Maybe he had driven off a few times to park and sleep somewhere away from that place to avoid him.

Mandy hid her frown quickly in the dimming light that was getting darker by the minute and hoped he didn't see it. She built back up her resolve and used the blanket to stir him up over her. She made sure to bend over slightly in front of him while unfolding and laying out the blankets for them layer upon layer.

Judging by his silence with no more flirty or snarky comments, she had only guessed he was looking right where she wanted him to, and she smiled letting him get a good view of her bent in that position. Her dress was no doubt riding up a tad bit showing the bottom curvature of her cheeks, her heartshaped butt teasing him no doubt



something fierce as he stood silently watching.

She almost heard his breath hitch slightly and heard his heavy footsteps getting closer to her. He was most likely coming over for a better view or to grab a handful of her. Before he could put his hands on her or do anything, she put the pillows down on the blankets over the flat barren patch of soft ground and grass. She had worked it free of rocks and sticks while sweeping as much as she could aside with a large pine branch she picked up. When done she then turned to stand before him. Facing him now he could no longer grab her as she wasn't bent over for him to take what he wanted.

He looked slightly disappointed but then shrugged off his black leather jacket, cigarette still in his mouth, and put it on the hood of his car. His button up black shirt was unbuttoned slightly showing off his familiar golden Catholic necklace and a portion of his strong chiseled chest. His muscles were so powerful looking mandy gulped audibly but recovered with a flirty grin in his direction.

She looked away from him for a moment and when he walked over to her, he had stopped just before her so that by the time she had turned around again they were practically up against one another chest to chest and forehead to forehead. He looked into her green emerald eyes flitting his dangerous blue ones gently from side to side and then resting them on her lips and even lower. He brought his arms up to place his hands on the side of hers and rub them gently up and down tracing his fingers making goosebumps on her skin.

"Aren't you cold in that? Maybe you should lay down with me so I can warm you up."

The bumps on her skin weren't from the cold so much as from his teasing touch and fingertips as they massaged her arms. His breath was getting slightly labored the more he wanted to press his lips to hers and his voice was deep and sensual. Even in all of this he maintained his perfect posture when facing her. Despite her heels adding an extra inch to her height he was towering over her slightly so she had to tilt her head up to look him straight in his eyes. They were feral, hungry, and obvious about what he was thinking of her.

Just as he was about to reach his hand up and touch her face to grab

and cradle her jawline for the kiss he so badly wanted, she twisted out of his reach with a teasing laugh and kicked her heels off.

"As you wish, Billy. Come join me." He looked stuck where he stood watching her actually obey him for once. It was clear he was not expecting her to go along with it so easily.

Laying herself down on the blanket she patted it and was being careful not to wrinkle her dress, which if Billy had it his way would be ripped off of her by now judging from his carnal look forgetting all about his comment about the cold, and she rested her arms behind her head on the pillow showing off the smooth skin of her underarms to him.

The sleeves of her dress were loose over her lovely shoulders hanging off their round edges exposing pale babysoft skin. While laying down her breasts still looked amazing in the dress and very full for his hands to take hold of. Billy felt a longing to nibble and kiss on them as well as her soft neck and shoulders as he slowly came closer to the blanket.

It was clear to him Mandy was teasing him now, being spiteful as to make him want her and then pull herself out of his reach to twist the point in deeper. Just what was her end game here?

Before he could move even closer he saw a look in her eyes that was impish but also had a trace of nervous tension in them. This wasn't like her and her willful mask was faltering at times making him search for any weakness he could find. This was not the Mandy he knew. The shy soft girl who was always nervous and running from him or mouthing off to him. The one who always denied him from giving her pleasure or taking some of his own from her.

It was as if along with her complete physical makeover, her attitude and body language got a bonechilling sexual transformation as well. She was different and much more confident and her eyes were boring into him as if daring him to approach. She was now looking up at the stars pretending she didn't even notice his presence and closing her eyes. Her head tilted back exposed her delicious throat to him making him wince with a need to put his lips on it.

"Mandy..." He whispered in a husky lustfilled voice unable to finish his sentence because of his anticipation to touch her. He just kept repeating her name over and over again as if trying to find the words.

Whatever had come over her, he definitely liked it. But if she wanted to play with fire... could she truly handle the burn and take all of him? Would she go all the way? Was tonight the night he would finally get his hands and mouth all over her? So many questions burning through his mind. He groaned and sucked in air between his teeth as he watched her relax and sprawl out on her back before him on the blanket.

Looking around he didn't hear or see anyone within the immediate vicinity that could possibly interrupt his plans for her should things begin heating up between them. He licked his lips slowly drinking in the sight of her. He wanted to move but felt paralyzed. Almost unsure of how he should move in on her or if he should make her wait and ask him to.

"Yes, Billy? That's my name and I'm glad you're learning and using it for once. Are you coming or what?" Her words made a stab of lust course through his body.

*Not yet, Mandy. Not yet.* He thought, a smile curling his lips.

He took another drink of his beer can that he had cracked open earlier and simply watched her for a moment. She was a smiling temptress coaxing him to make the first move. His pride fought with his head and his heart in a three-way warzone of immense proportions dusted with a carnal desire further confusing everything. Her body was so supple and ready and she looked amazing. His hands itched to roam all over it but he tensed still unsure.

Why was he delaying? This was MANDY. Mandy Hawkins. Another girl that would wind up writhing under his body and screaming his name out like all the others. But no... she was different. Special. Even he knew that by now. By now the beer was hitting him but he didn't want to get too drunk. Just a slight buzz to take the edge off and fend off the tension rising between them. Since when did he need liquid courage to seduce a female?

And he would seduce her. Maybe soon... if things went according to plan and he played all his cards right. He wanted her to be a melting mess of a puddle in his hands unable to resist or say no. He wanted her to scream his name over and over and feel every inch of him buried inside of her.

He wanted to take her soft and slow at first and then hard and fast. He longed to press her down into the soft grass and blanket with all of his weight and press his hardening length into her so she could feel just what she was doing to him. Had been doing to him since meeting her from day one over the summer.

"Wouldn't you like to know." He shot back and began to remove his boots one at a time.

She laughed a light giggle then grinned and crooked her finger at him ignoring his perverted comment. He gave her a look that spoke volumes, so loud she could almost hear them in her own head. She could practically feel and see him getting hard for her through his tight denim jeans.

She surprised herself with her new flirtatious nature and spurring him on. He was apparently just as surprised as she was at this sudden change. This was not like her at all. Billy nodded and moved to join her on the blanket beneath the stars.

What was the catch? What was the price he would have to pay, possibly in blood, to have a piece of this lovely vixen before him and slide himself into her where he had always longed to be? Just what was she doing to him?

He knelt on his knees before her, almost obediently, and crawled slowly onto the blanket making her wait as long as he possibly could. She had raised up slightly to face him and for a moment his icy blue eyes stared into her darker green ones that matched his need. His breathing was ragged but she didn't show any signs of being phased by his figure looming over her. Oh how he wished she would give him a sign.

"Gonna kneel there all day or come join me? What's the matter... not feelin it tonight to tease me? Or is it all the beer you've had so far

impairing your ability?" Her words angered him but in a sexual way. He grumbled slightly and finished off his can then crumpled it and tossed it aside. He saw something before him he wanted to drink more than that.

He looked at her lips letting his gaze wash over them and felt the need to press his into hers letting wave after wave of pleasure crash over them both and let them drown in a sea of lust.

He wanted to kiss her until she had no more snooty sassy comments to make towards him. He wanted to see her face go blank with pleasure all because of him and what he could do to her.

"My ability is in tact, sweetness. Are you sure this is what you want?" He said still looking at her but keeping his hands on the blanket not moving another inch. She layed back down on her back and shifted herself so he could lay over her welcoming him with her body which answered him wordlessly. He had wanted her desperately writhing underneath, broken and a hot mess, him since he first laid eyes on her.

This was almost like a dream come true and yet so very surreal. Like the hundreds of wet dreams she had given him for many nights since she first walked into his chaotic lust fueled life. It was as if they were all being made into a reality tonight and looking up at the stars he saw how this was a perfect opportunity to woo her.

Her eyes sparkled under those stars and she lay there seemingly willing to have him move his body over hers. She nodded to him and parted her lips slightly, running her tongue over her red lipstick and getting them ready for him absentmindedly. That's when he knew she wanted to kiss him too. His body was rigid with his urge for her but he relaxed a little and crawled over to her and gave her what she was asking for.

As soon as he layed down on top of her gently crushing her with his weight, she had softly moaned out underneath him and closed her eyes as he finally lowered his head into her neck and shoulder. He was breathing in her scent and smelling her lovely long black hair. She was like a gothic siren sent to torment him for some bad deeds committed in a past life somehow.

He breathed her in getting his fill but feeling like he could never get enough. She smelled like strawberries and coconut. He made like he was going to kiss her on the lips but she mischeviously pushed his face and lips away from hers making him kiss her neck as she turned her head away. He groaned at her denial of him having that first kiss he wanted so badly but was happy enough to kiss her soft pale neck. He teased her skin with his tongue and pressed himself into her core, making her writhe slightly beneath him.

"Fuck... Mandy you feel so good. And you smell so fucking pretty." He huskily whispered into her ear and kissed along the edge of it, playfully sucking her lobe into his eager mouth and biting it gently between his teeth.

He smelled amazing too. Like cigarette smoke, alcohol, and his favorite gum he had been chewing moments before that he spit out into the can before he crushed it. She never thought she could like those smells or that combination on a boy but it was driving her wild now.

She whimpered softly and he smiled feeling her body get eager for him as he lay on her and burying his face into her hair and shoulder. His hands had been on the blanket one on each side of her shoulders but now he was propping himself up on one strong arm at the elbow . He lowered his mouth hungrily on her neck exploring it with his tongue in little snakelike flicks as he moved his other free hand down to her knee. He had used his knee to move her legs apart in order to get in between them before settling into her.

Tracing his fingers along her beautiful shapely legs, he was feeling her fishnet tights and running his fingers over them gingerly while raising his hand higher and higher with intent to gently plunder all of her sweetness at the apex of her thighs. He wanted his fingers deep inside her and hitting her g spot so she would buck wildly against him.

When he reached her knee and got a little higher towards her apex, she instinctively moved her hand down grabbing his to stop it while easily shutting off access of his probing fingers to her inner thighs. He stopped and froze mid kiss on her collarbone.

"What is it. Did I do something wrong? Mandy you need to be straight with me. I can't do this hot cold back and forth stuff for too much longer." His breathing and his curls of blonde golden silky hair tickled her neck and chest. He growled it out softly and breathed into her and she could smell his mint gum strongly and feel his hot words searing her skin.

She let go of his hand and then brought hers up to the back of his head and was running her fingers through his sexy mullet, twirling her fingers into the nape hairs on the back of his neck and making him moan gruffly at the feel of it as she did. It felt amazing and he melted back into her waiting for her to allow him to continue.

"No. But I don't want it too fast. Slow down. Let's enjoy it. Be gentle, please." She said whispering in his ear while still playing with his curly locks and then softly raking his scalp gently on the back of his head with her fingernails. He was panting now, practically moments from begging for whatever he wanted. Would he beg? Or would he make her fold and give in? Just who would win this power struggle tonight? Why had she not thought this through better before agreeing to go with him tonight and dressing up the way she did.

He groaned against her skin and she could feel his hardening length grind into her needily as he still lay between her thighs. He wanted her so badly, it was so obvious. Butterflies were fluttering in her stomach and she could practically feel their bodies heating up as he slowly ground himself into her.

He resumed kissing her neck but it wasn't enough. She instantly needed more of him. She wanted to kiss him so badly. She could tell he wanted it too by the way he made due with kissing her neck and shoulder in place of her lips. His tongue gliding over her with an intense need to touch her own. And then he finally did it. He asked.

"Mandy. Please. Don't make me beg for it. Let me kiss you. Just one kiss. Please, Mandy." He mouthed the words into her skin and it made her feel triumphant over him. Powerful and in complete control.

He was begging to kiss her now and she loved every second of it. He practically whimpered at her touch and the feel of her body

responding to his when he was pushing against her.

She debated letting him have this small victory, but did she really want to? If they kissed, would it ignite something so explosive and fierce between them that it would push them past the point of no return? Would it lead to what she wanted to tease him and deprive him of tonight without allowing him to have it? She held the reigns but if she gave him the slightest inch, she knew he would take more than a whole mile and he wouldn't stop there.

"Billy... relax. I'm here with you in the dark. Alone. Hard parts over, right? Just let us be and enjoy this, whatever it is." She could hardly believe the words that were coming out of her mouth. She was actually dominating him and commanding HIM. Billy Hargrove.

Her mind was just as clouded with lust and wanton need as his was, that much she knew. She could feel her need rising by the second the more he tried to push his hand higher along her thighs and the more urgently he devoured her throat nibbling on it and biting her bare shoulder, the more she knew they were inching toward that fateful first kiss. He was practically growling as he pressed himself into her like a wild animal in heat.

Suddenly, he broke away from her and moved his torso up the stay on his knees above her looking down at her questioning look. She looked dazed with lust and it made him burn inside for her feeling the same way. While he was looking down at her, Mandy saw what she was doing to him in his eyes. They looked torn and crazed almost. It was so obvious he was losing his own self control. He wasn't even bothering to mask it now or try to play the part of the charmer.

"Billy... what are you...?" She was about to ask him what he was doing but he placed his fingers over her lips like she had earlier and gently rubbed them slowly. He was enjoying the feel of her soft ruby pouting mouth that he so longed to press his own hungrily against. She stared at him quietly with half lidded eyes waiting for him to explain but she found courage in her to playfully nip at his fingertips and give a slight lick. He groaned and moved his hands to his body fumbling with his buttons.



"Just getting more comfortable, baby." When he called her that, it was the first time.

Mostly his names for her were taunts, jeers, something to irritate her or set her off. But calling her baby like that in his husky gentle tone with passion behind it lit a fire up inside of her and made her breath catch in her throat.

She swallowed as she watched him slowly finish unbuttoning the rest of his buttons on his soft dark shirt. As he did so more and more of his chest and torso came into her view, a treat she secretly loved to behold, and when the shirt was done his strong four pack on his abs were on full display. She loved his bellybutton too and could see his strong abs and hips and the little curved line that would lead even lower to his happy trail and the mystery that laid beyond that which her eyes had never seen.

His perfect Adonis like body whenever he had exposed it at parties she had only ever seen from the hips up. When he shrugged his shirt off and tossed it she saw just how truly broad and powerful his shoulders were. His thick neck and adams apple, his strong pecs, his smooth tanned skin in all their muscled glory.

She felt small and helpless before him and swallowed hard as his gaze paralyzed her into place with their intensity. His jeans were now riding lower from all their friction as their bodies had moved pressing into one another, almost hugging his thick beautiful hips and under his pelvic region, and she couldn't help but lower her eyes there.

He smiled at her knowing full well the power he held over her and what the sight of his body did to her. All her confidence from touching him and blocking him earlier was now seeming to melt away. She struggled with it and tried to keep herself calm before him.

"Billy, why do you need your shirt off to feel comfortable?" She said gasping as he knelt there letting her see how well contoured he was in the pale moonlight.

A devious sparkle was in his eyes now as he ran his own hands over his own perfect and oh so touchable lickable abs, past his darkened deep ring of a belly button, and began to slowly undo the buckle of

his belt. The sight of it made her heart skip a beat. It sent shivers through her spine to hear the sound of him doing it and all of it combined was almost her undoing and too much for her to take.

Her mouth went dry and she saw him fumble slowly with it, drawing it out to tease her, making it last and enjoying the reaction he was getting from it. Just making her wild with lust got him off. This was the first moment tonight she felt she had failed at being the one to drive him crazy and maintain her goal of being his personal tease. Now he was turning it all around on her. She wouldn't be able to last much longer if he kept taking off articles of his clothing like that.

The buckle came loose finally, the sound of the metal releasing the leather, and with a soft groan to mess with her even more he slid the belt out of the loops of his jeans gently tugging on them. This was highly erotic to her for a reason she could not come up with.

Moving his hand to the button of his pants he began to slide it through the denim slit that held it there and she watched helplessly with her back flattened to the grass watching. He grinned at her response and moved over her again, holding himself up with one arm as he undid the round metal button as if to work it free with his other hand. Instead of undoing it himself all the way, which had been part of his game, he reached out grabbing her hands and leaning over her he placed them on it and looked her square in the eyes.

"Did you think you would win that easy, Mandy? Did you think I wouldn't figure out what you were trying to do to me? Now you've gone and made trouble for yourself. Because I want you to be the one to free me from my cage tonight. The one you have held me in for so long. I've been a prisoner of my need for you for way longer than I can bare it."

He whispered feircely to her in the dark breathless in between sentences. Her surroundings spun as his voice drove her crazy at how he was talking to her. Her heart was beating so fast she feared he could hear it pounding away in her chest.

"Set me free, Mandy. You brought us this far... where's your confidance now? Don't you wanna finish? Open it. I'll show you things tonight you have never before experienced in your whole life.

No one could give to you better than I can. No one."

She swallowed hard and felt him press his groin into her hands daring her to undo the rest of what was the only thing keeping him from being in perfect union with her tonight. If she unlocked that cage and released him there's no telling just how far it would go. Now he was turning the tables on her and calling her bluff. Did she have the guts to prove him wrong and show him she could play his game too? Did she still want to fight to gain control? Or would she break for him and be his prisoner instead?

"Billy... you know what I want." She breathlessly whispered still trying to call his bluff. It was a bold move what she would say next.

"I want you inside of me. Now." She said it biting her lower lip.

*No! What?* Her head was about to explode in contrariness but her body wanted it deep down in every fiber of her being and shook her to her core.

Jesus, what the hell was she saying? Was she really that willing to begin talking dirty to him just to prove she had more control than he did and call him on his seduction? Well, it seemed to have worked because as soon as the words left her lips he shut his eyes showing her his long dark thick lashes and licked his lips slowly. He was imagining it in his head... all the things he would do, could do to her. She was certain there would be no position he would spare. Was it his desire or the alcohol fueling his boldness with her? He had NEVER gone this far! Ever.

She instantly regretted making him hide those beautiful orbs of his from her with her daring declaration. He grunted down at her over her words and gave a choked back moan saying her name with an intensity she had never heard him utter.

"Careful, princess. You just might get what you're asking for." He stared back into her eyes and urged her to do what he had instructed her to. He nodded towards the button. A direct challenge to her. She looked at it too with her hands gently resting there. So close and yet so far.

"Unzip me... and claim your prize. I'm waiting..." He growled down at her trailing off his words while lowering himself back over her, his face just inches above hers, his lips grazing into her lips softly and with one swift movement.

She could feel his tongue dart out and lick her lips wantonly not even sparing a thought for possible rejection, his desire mounting by the moment. How she longed to part her lips and invite his sweet tongue into her mouth letting it dance with hers. Her stomach knotted up with pleasure and stabbed at her as his lips continued to trace hers mercilessly.

She began to undo the button and popped it free. One down. Now all she needed was to unzip his jeans and wait for his next move. She wanted to see if he was serious but the way he growled at her said without a doubt he was. It was getting to that point where she could take none of this back should he decide to take her tonight.

He gazed into her eyes for a moment seeing her daring to cross that threshold and smirked at her stopping his licking of her sweet little red mouth. She tasted so fucking sweet it killed him. Made his entire body clench up with a need no girl had ever made him feel before. He wanted her to use those sinful lips to pleasure him and in return he longed to taste her too.

Just how far would she take this to go and prove she could Master him at his own technique? She was playing games, he knew that, but he wasn't. He badly wanted her and he knew he could be the one to unlock that stubborn heart of hers and set it on fire. That he could be the one to open up her body and her craving one hundred percent and show her just how deliciously he could fill her.

The night they danced at the Halloween party and he had serenaded her by singing in her ear. He meant it. That song haunted him ever since and without a doubt she was piercing through the thick black hide around his heart with a fiery arrow. She had driven it straight into his chest when she was sleeping that night and whispered his name in her bed. Her sleeping form was too much. How he longed that night to climb into her bed with her and just hold her and touch her.

Why did she stop? He pressed himself more urgently against her wiggling his hips as if taunting her to unzip him and get it over with. Any moment now and he would lose all patience and press his hungry mouth down onto hers and kiss her with wild abandon. If she didn't do it soon he would make her want to do it. Her eyes were fierce and calculating. She was clearly thinking about whether or not he was the Pandora's Box worth opening.

His lips tickled hers and Mandy froze up. She had her fingers on the small metal zipper but couldn't bring herself to pull it down. Her dress was practically riding up past her hips now and as if to push her into it he made some space between their bodies and moved his hand back down to her inner thigh continuing where he had left off.

"Clock's ticking, Mandy. Here... let me give you some incentive." He said putting his lips back onto her bare neck and messaging it with his tongue.

He kissed and licked and sucked on her skin biting her every now and then making her back arch up against him while squirming below his half naked body. She gasped when his hand and lithe long fingers found the apex of her thigh and gently began to stroke her over her silky black thong. She could feel his thumb and forefinger manipulating her mound and pressing in between her nethers searching for her small bud nestled between.

Panting and moaning out his name she undulated underneath him pressing her hips and pelvic up to meet his hand. He grinned while kissing her along her jawline and up under her chin. Finally finding her soft little clit he pressed into it and made slow deliberate circles with his thumb against it through her panties. Her face was pure bliss as she moaned softly to him and he knew she could no longer deny that he knew exactly how to touch her and please her. There was no going back from this. The barrier had been breached and she would never forget what he was doing to her.

"Mandy... all you have to do is kiss me and set me free. Don't run from me anymore. I need you... and I know you need me too." He looked up from kissing under her chin and enjoyed her face being overtaken with pure pleasure as his finger and thumb manipulated her through the silken undergarments.

If she waited much longer he was going to be tempted to pull himself out for her to see just how well endowed he was and how much he wanted her. Once she got a look at what she was doing to him, she would no longer be able to deny that his body was screaming out for hers and that he belonged to her. Billy never thought he could want someone, just one woman, so badly in all his life.

But Mandy was driving him beyond the edges of reason and the sounds she made was twisting his stomach up in knots. Who would finally give in and allow this facade to end so they could both be one with each other. He had no doubt her tightness would fit him perfectly like a velvet glove and he longed to feel her for himself. To be the first to enter that unknown territory and claim what he felt was rightfully his.

No longer wanting to wait, he decided to make the first move, and when she opened her eyes pressing her forehead to his, he moved in close still stroking her netherlips expertly and with skillful precision, and took what he wanted. His pressed his hot hungry mouth against hers and forced her lips apart with his searching tongue, probing her inner sweetness, and enjoying the feel of her flooding all of his senses.

Locking his lips with hers he moaned deeply against her and moved his hand to slip it inside her silken thong, no longer being able to bear his fingers not making direct contact with her flesh. He could feel how wet he had made her and she whimpered into his kiss when his fingers sought out her wet slit to continue teasing her. She froze in their kiss her lips receptive to his like no other when she felt him slide his long fingers along her labia and tease around her opening.

Pushing him away from her mouth and making him painfully feel the withdrawal from his proper place, she shook her head and stared at him wide eyed.

"No, Billy. Please. Don't do that. I can't. I'm scared." He froze on top of her resting his finger against her clitoral folds as he looked into her eyes. His breath was rapid and he longed to put his mouth back onto hers.

"Why not? Mandy, isn't this what you wanted?..." He looked

confused, maybe even a little hurt, as he stared into her burning a hole in her soul with his gorgeous blue eyes. But he had listened to her and stopped when she asked. He was waiting to see what she wanted him to do.

"I... I do. But I'm... well I'm a... I mean I've never..." she couldn't force the words out. He got a look of pure realization that spread across his face as he looked from her eyes to her puffy swollen lips from where he had kissed her into oblivion just moments before.

His body still held up above hers not moving an inch until he let it all sink in. Suddenly it dawned on Billy that all of Tommy's bullshit talk and the rumors around the school about her had been true. She was an innocent. That would explain a lot about her to him honestly but he just never thought it were possible. He had never before been with a girl who hadn't done at least SOMETHING with another guy before him. To him girls like Mandy were rare and it almost made him get even harder just thinking about her as uncharted territory. No man's land.

"Oh. You're a..." He couldn't bring himself to say the words either for some stupid reason.

She had him so wrapped around his finger he couldn't even think straight other than trying to pleasure her, that this completely blind sided him.

She slowly nodded worried that he would do one of two things. Either he would stop and not want to bother with her out of some weird sort of respect for her chastity. Or he would be driven even further to want her and take it. To be the first to ever be inside of her.

"But you said... you said you wanted me to..." He was still trying to figure her out.

This new revelation was really throwing a curveball at him and seemingly ruining all his plans. She bit her lower lip and looked away for a moment ashamed.

Now the truth was out. Now he knew that she didn't have any

freakin' clue what she was doing. She was walking blindly in this territory with him and using only her knowledge from books. All the romance novels she had ever read her entire life that told her how things were supposed to work. But reading it in a book and doing it in real life were painfully obvious to be two different things entirely.

She sighed and couldn't look him in his eyes. She had gotten all dressed up. She had gotten all ready to simply toy with him and then ask him to take her home. Had told herself she would go as far as she dared and then deny him and frustrate him. But he had taken it father and called her on her game. He was moments from breaching her comfort zone and doing something that couldn't be undone.

"I'm sorry. It wasn't a complete lie when I said that. I just..." She felt ashamed and the frustration at her stupidity for teasing a hot blooded guy like Billy made her cheeks burn at her indignation of her carelessness.

He was still looming over her waiting. Then he did something she did not in a million years expect him to. He withdrew his hand from her small tight opening and mercifully abandoned further seeking her heated core out with his fingers. She looked back at him and with one swift movement he brought his fingers to his lips and grinned tasting her. Yup, same old Billy. But at least he hadn't pushed further.

"Damnit, Mandy, you really should have... shit. I could have done something that-"

"I know." She cut him off watching him taste her slick fluids from where his fingers had been moments before. It made her stomach flip flop and put a fire in her belly she couldn't deny. Now what would happen?

"Mmmm. You taste amazing too. Well, I can think of something I could do that won't change that for you."

Her eyes met his and he felt that her hands were still on the zipper of his jeans. He moved them away and rebuttoned them and even made a show of grabbing his belt and sliding it back into the loops to rebuckle it. She sighed with a mix of frustration and sadness and wanted to kick herself for hatching this stupid half baked plan. But



his words had jarred around in her head. What could he do that wouldn't take that piece of herself? She cursed herself for being so innocent and naive sometimes.

He let out a wicked laugh and lowered himself back onto her and before she could ask or say anything he pressed his lips back to hers allowing her to taste herself on his mouth.

She moaned and closed her eyes finally relishing in feeling his hungry lips on hers wondering why she had waited so long to let him kiss her. He felt amazing and his tongue was positively sinful with skilled practice as he sucked her lower lip into his mouth and nibbled on it teasingly. Their breath mingled and she could once more taste his mint gum with a small trace of cigarettes.

Never breaking the kiss until he was ready he kissed a trail down her chin and then lower underneath it. He was now kissing along her throat and to her collarbone. His tongue slipping out to taste her occasionally as his mouth burned a hot trail between her breasts.

He placed a hand on her back and found the zipper to her dress slowly pulling it down just enough to loosen the front of it where her round perky breasts were being held captive. She froze but didn't stop him so he continued. Pushing her dress down slightly and tugging the sleeves down her shoulders he bared her chest to him.

In the moonlight her pale milky skin and full soft tits were beautiful. Her nipples small and a dark rosy pink. The cool air hit them teasing and she watched him as he hungrily drew one hardening nipple into his perfect mouth. He sucked and he licked and he bit. He nibbled her little nub and ran his tongue over it in slow circles driving her crazy as he fondled her other exposed breast with his hand.

He drew the other nipple in between his strong lean fingers and pinched it softly making her cry out softly and once more arch her back to him. He grinned loving that she was enjoying the feel of his mouth explore and tease her, giving playful wolfish bites to her nipple, as he allowed his mouth to move further down. Placing both hands on her dress to recover her breasts from the cold night air, he lifted up the bottom of her dress getting a full delicious view of her upper thighs, her flat smooth stomach, and her abdomen.

He continued his vicious kisses from her ribcage and to her belly button where he teased it with his tongue. It was only then that Mandy filled in the blanks on what he planned to do. But she didn't stop him as long as he didn't use his fingers to probe her depths. He didn't seem like he was going to out of respect for her, which she could hardly believe.

Nevertheless, he was hungry for her and he was not slowing down. His mouth moved along her soft stomach and abs and found its way to her panty line and where the fishnet tights began. He moved his hands and fingers delicately to the tights not wanting to scare her thinking he was going to do something she wouldn't want him to.

"Wait... Billy..." She had started to say but he looked up at her while kissing along where her panties met her stomach tracing his long powerful tongue along her pelvic region.

"Shhhh... don't worry. I'm going to take care of you tonight, princess. I won't breach your sacred place. You have my word. Just relax, lay back, and let me please you, Mandy. That's all I want to do."

He was looking up into her eyes from his position and practically begging her. His longing was intense and she saw it as he pleaded with her, his gaze intense. She nodded her approval and watched him as he continued to kiss her, at first over her soft thong, and then as he pulled those down along with her tights, he revealed her entire world to him and smiled softly at it. Lowering his head and readjusting himself with his shoulders more properly between her thighs he wasted no time in tasting her again.

Her eyes almost rolled in the back of her head when he began to lap at her folds with his amazing tongue. Pleasure in waves were rolling over her and it was almost too much to take. She completely lost it when his hot eager mouth found her little clit that was hardened and throbbing against his lips. He darted his tongue out to tease it and she moaned his name loudly several times.

"Oh... Billy... oh God... don't stop... GOD!"

"Yes... yes I am." He said playfully and egotistically as he dipped his tongue between her folds and tasting her while thoroughly enjoying

every minute of it.

This would be his first time making a virgin orgasm against his mouth and the thought of it was driving him on making him want to make her see stars when he was done. Not just the stars that were above them, but stars in her head, which made him double his efforts and pleasuring her with his mouth.

She was beginning to buck her hips up into him pressing herself harder against his face and he practically growled into her when she reached her hands down to tangle her fingers in his hair. She tugged ever so softly on his curls as he moved his head in a rhythm as easy to him as driving his Camaro down the road. His motor was running for her and he could feel himself get hard inside his jeans as her moans got louder and louder.

She was about to see fireworks and he was pleased with himself to be the one to do it. That she had allowed him this small piece of herself and trusted him. His heart was pounding and it matched the throbbing of her clit as he kissed and licked and sucked on it tenderly and then with more urgency. She was close, he could feel it, and he wasn't going to stop now.

Rolling her hips and pushing into him her fingers twisted deliciously into his unruly golden curls and she was sighing his name in between breathing hard and panting. He felt her body begin to tighten up and hot searing lightning was coursing through his veins at his desire for her. God, she didn't even have to touch him or return the favor and he was so hot for her. He was dying inside to enter her folds and be her first but he knew that was off limits. She was not ready for that. He wondered if she ever would be.

Mandy whimpered under him as his mouth continued to lick and nuzzle her fleshy nub raw. It was so sensitive and she could feel her stomach cramping up, her body getting rigid, and felt like she was going to catch fire down below. She didn't really know what to expect and a part of her was terrified. But by the way he moved and pressed his tongue and lips into her she trusted Billy that he knew what he was doing. He had said he would take care of her and had softened up to her so much it startled her. This wasn't like him at all.

She half expected him to be angry when her secret was laid bare to him and she had feared he would make fun of her or leave. But he had stayed. He was not giving up on her despite this. And in this moment, he was the softest most gentle boy she had ever known. This side of him was so precious to her that she wondered if he would still want her after it was all done. If he would ever show this side to her again or if it was only on display because he was getting to do things to her.

The pleasure from his mouth jerked her from her thoughts and she felt her body almost seize up. The moment was fast approaching and yet she knew nothing of what would be. She just allowed him to please her with his tongue and continued to pet him playing with his curly hair and moaning.

"Billy... I feel strange. What do I do? I don't want to mess this up..." She said worrying and he smiled into her as he continued to pleasure her.

"Relax, babygirl. Just let it happen. You'll know when. Don't hold back." He said while moaning into her and not letting up his pace. She cried out and shivered as he worked her over just right.

Billy felt her nearing her climax. Soon she would be thrown over the edge and shaking uncontrollable against him, quivering thighs and all. He knew how it worked. He had done this with many girls before but it was different somehow with Mandy. More special. More sacred. Her body called to him in a way he had never felt or heard with another girl. Something inside of him was about to snap the more she made those noises and the faster he moved his mouth and tongue over her. He was moaning into her as he continued to drive her over the brink. Her legs and hips locked around his neck and shoulders and pressing into his back driving him in deeper.

He was half tempted to reach into his jeans and pleasure himself while doing this to her but he realized he would rather have her hands on him. Slowing down and then speeding up to tease her, he enjoyed making her whimper and struggle against him, and he got himself into the perfect rhythm. Soon she would be flooding his mouth with her release and he wanted every drop of it.

"Billy... I feel it. Oh, god, I feel it... please!" She was driving him crazy, this innocent little virgin just with her words alone, and he was beside himself with just how much she was making him need her by the minute. He never wanted this moment to end.

All his thoughts were on her as he let her have it, that final explosion, giving her soft folds and her little bud everything he had. He was flicking his tongue over it and then capturing it between his lips to suck on it slowly and applying pressure on it with his mouth. He was tempted to put his tongue inside of her at one point but he was afraid if he did she would stop him and move away. He couldn't bear that. She tasted so fucking good. As good as she smelled. He was desperate to put two fingers inside of her and really drive it home but he knew he couldn't do that. Not until she was ready for that. He would work night and day to make her ready for him like that.

"Cum, Mandy. Let it cum. Don't be afraid. It'll feel really good. Just let it cum, rabbit." He had used his favorite nickname as he urged her on to do God knows what because she had no clue. She just relaxed as he said and felt the pressure building. He looked up at her seeing how cute she looked while covering her mouth with one hand trying to stifle her noises. He wanted to hear her! This he could not allow her to do.

Reaching up and grabbing her hands away from her face and from his hair he placed them by her sides close to her hips. He locked them down with his grip somewhat putting her in bondage as he finished her off. This only served to get her even more hot for him. He always knew that a naughty girl was inside the shy exterior of that little good girl act. She may be innocent and pure but she definitely knew full well what her noises, facial expressions, and teasing touches were doing to him.

"Now, Mandy. I need to taste you." He whispered fiercely in between lapping at her moist slit and messaging her little bud with his tongue and lips.

Her body shuddered and the moment came quicker than he thought it would. He felt her warmth bursting hot and wet in his mouth and tasted her as she came hard against his lips. Mandy was breathing hard and had stopped wriggling against him. Her stomach rising and

falling rapidly. His tongue licked up her sweet nectar not wanting to waste a single drop. He kissed her there and moaned into her netherlips before pulling himself up and over her.

She had her eyes closed and was still. He was positive she had no idea what to expect and this first orgasm had taken her by complete surprise. Gently laying beside her he smoothed her dress back down and pulled her panties and tights back over her hips to cover her back up. But he didnt stop touching her with his hands there gently rubbing. She flinched and was super sensitive. He laughed at that but let her be.

Laying by her side completely shirtless and out of breath he turned to look at her. When she opened her eyes to gaze over at him she had the biggest lazy smile stretched across her face.

*Yup. He's still got it. No complaints.*

The mental scoreboard came back up. Mandy: 2. Billy: 10.

He admired her expression and rolled over to pull her into his arms. They lay there a while just breathing and listening to each other's heartbeats, cuddled up for warmth in the blankets once their bodies cooled down and the chill night air began to get to them. Billy nuzzled his chin over the top of her head enjoying the smell of her hair and listened to her point out stars to him. The only stars he was thinking of however, were the ones he put into her eyes when he had made her climax for the very first time.

He only left her side to smoke a cigarette, returning to lay with her and as they clasped hands together, he felt different inside and everything seemed to be falling into place. He would show her that just because she gave a part of herself to him, he still wanted her and that wouldn't change. He would prove it to her because deep down he felt he had to also prove it to himself. Mandy was changing him for the better.

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## **19. Hot & Cold - Choices & Consequences**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

### **HOT AND COLD - CHOICES AND CONSEQUENCES**

#### **Summary:**

Billy and Mandy have fallen asleep on the blanket at Lover's Lake.

Billy wakes and tries to stir her from her sleep to bring her home and try to be back before Neil will be pissed at him for being out too late.

Something in Mandy changes and it confuses and angers Billy. What is going on?

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The night was still and peaceful. Mandy and Billy rested on the blanket under the stars just listening to his heart and breathing as she lay her head on his chest.

At some point in the night enjoying the sounds of crickets and wild animals, maybe an occasional frog or fish in the lake splashing, Mandy and Billy had fallen asleep in each other's arms.

There was a crunching noise in the darkness around the lake nearby. A slightly loud rustle of bushes that had woken him out of his peaceful rest beside her. Living with a form of PTSD had its perks and advantages. It often made him highly alert and more aware of his surroundings.

He guessed he could thank Neil for that one because in a way it toughened him up and sharpened his survival skills and often helped him win fights he couldn't otherwise have. But no matter how tough he was, he could never seem to face Neil or stand up to him, he was the one fight he would never see himself winning.

Glancing around him he wondered just how late it was. The rustling sounds had stopped leaving only crickets and frogs once more and he turned to look down at the sleeping soft girl in his arms. He softly smiled at her sleeping face but knew they couldn't stay too much longer. If he was late dropping her off and coming home Neil would give him hell for not being home at a reasonable hour. Mandy stirred in his arms and looked happy. Perhaps she was dreaming of him unconsciously basking in her afterglow still. He had no idea how long they had been asleep.

"Mandy. Mandy, wake up, nap time's over. We have to go. I have to get you home soon. My dad will flip his shit and I can only imagine what your parents would say if I didn't have you home at your dad's mandated curfew." He tried to touch her face gently and wake her but all she did was groan and grumble in her sleep too comfortable against him to open her eyes.

"No. Just let me sleep. I like laying here with you. I'll get up... in a bit..." She said sleepily trying to hold back a yawn and cozying up into him even more not wanting to wake up.

His precious lazy little rabbit had passed out from the pleasure he gave her earlier and he was proud of it. No other girl had laid with him like she did. No other girl stayed long enough to. Either that or he never allowed anyone to like he did with her.



He sighed smiling at her and made a few more attempts to wake her up. As he tried to rouse her he admired her restful form curled up at his side. She made him feel so strong with her soft small body against his and it made him feel like he could protect her from anything. But as much as he loved seeing her there, they really needed to get home and she was simply not having it.

Getting a slow devious grin over his face he decided to get her attention with something he knew wouldn't fail. He moved his hands to her knee and slid them up to her inner thigh beginning to rub her just where his lips and tongue had been no more than maybe an hour ago.

Her brows knit up at the feel of him touching her there right on the tender button between her folds and slowly her eyes opened with the realization that he was once more putting his hands on her there. She bolted up out of her half dead sleep and pushed his hand away protecting herself from him once more not wanting whoever was touching her to go too far.

It illicited a deep amused chuckle from him, low and throaty, while watching her scramble to remember she was with him and not some stranger. That it was his trusting hand that was touching her with no intent to do anything bad or break his promise to her from earlier.

"Hey, what? Huh?... No, stop it!" She had almost slapped him in her half dazed awakening but he dodged it now laughing even harder at her as she began to really wake up and recognize him.

"Damnit! Billy, what the hell? You scared me..."

She spat at him for startling her awake in the worst way. She had been real close to kneeling him in the balls until she woke from her half sleep and registered his smiling face seeing it was Billy.

Had she expected any less from someone like him, though? The mirth in his eyes made his features look so handsome that she couldn't help but soften her look of anger and relax more. Suddenly, she was recalling everything they did together earlier, and she felt a heat creep over her face and a familiar ache of pleasure tie her stomach up over him.

"Well, look who's awake. Welcome back, rabbit. Having sweet dreams about me?" He teased her and her face reddened by the second.

He stretched and made out like he was going to allow her space to get up from the blankets and from him but when she attempted to, in one smooth move that took her by surprise, he gripped her wrist and pulled her back down onto him sitting her in his lap. She was facing him and straddling his strong frame making her black dress hike a ways up her thighs and he pulled her mere inches from his face.

She moaned softly against her will still trying to become more awake and thought he was about to kiss her. Didn't he get enough of her earlier? He could seriously drop the act now and perhaps let her be for the rest of her life.

She held no illusions that as soon as he dropped her off, that would be it, and she would never encounter him again. He would pass along their night to the rumor mill, ruin her reputation, make everyone laugh at her for being his fool and latest conquest, and then go back to kissing and groping girls in front of her to drive the heartache even deeper home. He was not a one woman man and had she really thought she was something special and different from all the other girls he chased?

Maybe she looked the part tonight but she wasn't good enough for him and she knew it. He had got what he wanted and now it was time to go their separate ways. Hopefully he would be merciful enough to leave her alone around school, at the library, and when across the street from her. Looking at him trying to see if any part of him could possibly want to keep her forever, all she saw was the mask he wore that was part of his act. She knew it wouldn't last long. And the bitter tears would come later in her room as he went to bed in his own forgetting all about her.

She had a single tear rolling down the corner of her eye along her cheek, and when he asked, she had told him it was most likely from yawning and waking up so abruptly from her slumber. He wiped it away with his lips and tongue tasting the salty line from her face. Placing his hands firmly on her ass gripping her there from behind he leaned in to nuzzle her neck and she just sat there on his lap moaning softly and closing her eyes.

"Billy, I need your word that you won't talk about tonight with anyone." She had suddenly resumed her frigid nature towards him and was stiffening up yet again as if the very thought of what they had done was filling her with regrets. He was mid kiss on her neck tangling his fingers in her hair and smelling her shampoo on her when she said this pulling him out of it.

"What? You honestly think I would? Mandy, I'm not the kind of guy to lick and tell."

He had grinned at his pun based on what he had done earlier to her. She could still feel it, the powerful orgasm he had given her, and recalled how amazing and wonderful it felt. This was going to be hard to do. Because a part of her wanted more and didn't want this night to end.

She groaned and pushed away from his kisses and carresses and looked him in the eyes. He had tried to joke with her but when he saw her expression was serious he had a confused look where before he had been grinning playfully at her with his statement.

"Yeah. I do. I don't want anyone to know. Okay? Let's just pretend it never happened. I'll ignore you and you can ignore me. The night is over and there's nothing more to say. So let's keep it that way." That wild fire was in her eyes again. She was angry... afraid... what for?

It was as if she had done a complete one eighty on him and was no longer the wild vixen from early who had been opened up to him. The vixen princess was gone and his familiar old rabbit had returned with a vengeance. Had she been using him? This was a twist he did not see coming. Normally he was the one who would use someone and then be done with them.

"Are you ashamed of what we have? Ashamed of what we did? You weren't complaining earlier when pinned underneath me and seemed to have no problems with me doing things to you just a little while ago. What's gotten into you?"

He growled out at her softly clearly getting aggitated by her hot cold attitude and attempted to grab her chin to make her look him in the eyes once more.

It was now him that was getting emotional whiplash from her chameleon like shifting of her moods. One minute she was hot for him and wanting his hands and lips on her and the next she was putting icy walls up and being closed off to him.

He wouldn't let his face show it but it was almost enough to make him hurt other than taking a blow to his pride. He knew damn well he pleased her and made no mistakes in giving her pleasure tonight. Everything had been perfect. So why the bitter look in her eyes and the venom dripping from her tongue that had only kissed him moments before?

"We don't have anything, Hargrove. This isn't about shame. It's about reality. This was supposed to be a night under the stars and you turned it into an R rated film. And like a fool, I let you take it that far. This won't happen again. So just... take me home." Her words stung him and he frowned at her for a minute.

So she WAS ashamed. Just as he suspected she truly wanted nothing to do with him. Hadn't he made it clear to her in the hallway fight with Tommy that he was claiming her? That he wanted her to be his? Had he not shown her that he wanted to protect her? He would NEVER offer anyone else what he offered to her. She was ripping it all up into pieces and running from him again. He had surprised himself with how he truly felt about it, but it was there, the spark. And she was killing it. Killing him.

She moved to get off of his lap yanking her wrist free but he held her there not letting her move. He was searching her eyes trying to figure out where this was all coming from within her. She looked at him defiantly and not letting him read anything in her dark green pools.

"I? I turned?- Mandy I don't know if you recall the way you were squirming beneath me and calling my name but this definitely wasn't just all my doing. You wanted it as much as I did and you can't hide that. Hell, I didn't even get anything in return other than the satisfaction of pleasing you, which isn't how I like it. So don't you dare try to turn this all on me like I took advantage of you. Don't you dare even try to compare me to the twisted actions of someone like Tommy." As he argued with her his jaw clenched up tightly, the muscles moving, his face flexing his displeasure at her.

His face was getting scrunched up in so much anger that it was making her breathless even at the sight of his rage, and she feared not choosing her words more carefully. He was even more beautiful when upset, but his blonde curls spilling over his veined forehead and wild eyes frightened her as they glared boring into hers.

God, how she was tempted to stop this fight and kiss him deeply to shut them both up. But she couldn't stop it. It was snowballing out of control. He was nearing his edge as well. Looking at him he was like a wind up toybox and the song was nearing the last note in which his rage would burst out of the box at her unexpectedly and scare her half to death. She tried to pull her wrist away from him even harder but he held on not wanting to release it.

"Let go of me, Billy. Take me home. I want to go home, now." She gritted through her teeth at him and he glared at her for a few seconds.

Way to kill the mood. What the fuck was her deal? He had given her the sun, the moon, and the stars, and here she was spitting it back in his face and accusing him of spreading it around in school tomorrow while also claiming he had made all the moves on her tonight. He just couldn't figure this out and he was getting beyond pissed.

"You can talk to me with more respect, Hawkins, or your ass can walk. Have fun going thirty plus miles in high heels, princess."

He snapped back at her and released his grip getting up to put his black button down shirt and leather jacket back on. It killed him to snap at her like this and for the first time he realized he didn't want to be an asshole around her.

She sat there for a moment seething in anger. She didn't even understand why she was being like this with him. Finally making progress and she was tearing it all down. For what? Fear? Regret? This wasn't a part of her plan. She knew she wanted to tempt and tease him and then deny him asking for him to take her home but not like this. Not with the animosity she was openly displaying to him. Why did she want to upset him and talk to him this way?

Billy wouldn't face her and told her to gather the blankets and

pillows and he would wash them as soon as he got home. As if their mingled scent all over it from what they were doing would be a toxic reminder to him he wanted to be rid of as soon as possible.

She bit back her urge to jump up and hold him apologizing. She wanted to. But she knew it was for the best to give him a little bit of what he wanted, and then slam the door in his face so they could both move on. This is what she wanted. For him to forget all about her and move on to other girls. Wasn't it?

She was thinking about how amazing he had been to her body and it made familiar chills creep throughout her body. He had taken his time and had been so gentle with her. But somehow she knew he would open his mouth and boast about his conquest with her, maybe even making up the lie he had slept with her taking her innocence, and then he would ignore her and once again go back to having other girls on his arm. She wasn't stupid.

In anger of him not even acknowledging her as he got dressed, she quickly picked up the blankets and pillows and then put her heels back on. She had to obey him for just a little while longer, tolerating him long enough to get him to drop her off in the safety of her home. Then she would be out of his life forever and ignore him in school as much as he would ignore her and going back to avoiding him as planned, his absence from her a comfort.

However, even in all of this, she wasn't too sure it's what she actually wanted and gazing at his form in the darkness, pain radiated from deep in her chest and gut. He was stiff with anger and wasn't saying a word to her. She could imagine she had hurt him quite badly, which she never thought was possible. He didn't care anything for her, she was just another toy. So why should he be so angry? She would simply make it easier in giving him what she knew he would eventually want anyway. Right?

"Are you done yet? Throw the blankets in the back and get in."

He was back to barking orders at her again, putting a hardened mask on his face while he packed up his leftover beer and lit a fresh cigarette. The spark of his lighter and the glow of the embers momentarily lighting up his clear annoyance on his face. There was

the 'asshole Billy' she was familiar with. Charming Billy and Happy Billy was gone, most likely lost to her forever now.

He took a deep drag waiting for her to get into the car. He cursed himself for even asking for this and bringing her here. The little virgin strumpet couldn't seem to make up her mind what she wanted and he felt strung along like a toy on a string. Or one of those wind up monkeys with the cymbals cursed to forever perform as a slave to whoever turned their crank.

She had definitely turned his and got him hot something fierce for her. Now she was acting as if none of it meant anything to her and for once in his life he felt what it was like to feel used.

Didn't she even know how much he actually cared for her? It surprised even him but if she couldn't see it, then why should he even bother to tell her? Obviously she wasn't right for him nor him for her. If this is how she was going to be each time with him he had better things to focus all his attention time and energy on.

Mandy tossed them in the back not caring if bits of grass and dirt got into the back of his car and this ticked him off even more. He gave her a look and she simply climbed in, shut the door angrily, and buckled herself in. He gave an exasperated sigh and climbed in himself.

She didn't speak to him for most of the ride back. Even when he purposefully accelerating his Camaro and driving at breakneck speeds whipping around corners trying to get a rise out of her. Sometimes when he was mad, driving like a bat out of hell made him feel better. It helped him release tension and anger almost as good as sitting in a hot tub for most or smoking after damn good sex.

His foot pressed down hard on the gas pedal and she turned to glare at him most likely about to say something. He ignored her and kept his steely blue gaze on the road and cranked up his music on the stereo not wanting to hear it. She could just deal with his rage and pain since she had caused it. And everything was going so good too.

She turned back to facing out the window and he realized his speeding was no longer really getting to her so he backed down just a

bit and drove semi normal the rest of the way. She wasn't worth a ticket anyway.

The ride seemed to last forever and then all of a sudden he saw his turn off for Old Cherry Road. He was running out of time with her. To do what? She obviously wanted nothing to do with him now. He couldn't figure out just where he had went wrong. Something he said? Something he did?

Why was she being so cold to him? She was acting like a drama queen... like Tina... like Carol... like all the other girls. He knew deep down this wasn't Mandy either, so who was she? Vixen and tease? Or a cold hearted frightened little girl? He couldn't get more than partial glimpses in between when she was just being REAL with him.

He turned to steal a glance at her before pulling up at the familiar driveway of Neils house. She could walk across the street and he wouldn't bother to walk her to her door. He would be the asshole she wanted him to be to make it easier for her to leave him and move on, if that is what she truly wanted. Judging by her words, it was. So be it.

If she wanted to use him and then toss him aside he could let her live with that and wash his hands of her too. A part of him longed to reach over and touch her, or to say something, anything, but he resisted the urge and simply sat there turning off the car. This was their stop. This was where their story ended. He got his date night and even if she was pissing him off, he wasn't going to say anything or out her about her secret, and without her knowing it he still had plans to keep Tommy off her back. Why he felt the need to be her knight in shining armor anymore after tonight was beyond him. She was cold as stone to him and didn't move at first.

"We're here." He ground out in a gravelly annoyed voice.

It was obvious by his speeding back he was eager to get rid of her. She felt exalted in her decision to do this. It hadn't ended the night quite how she had wanted but it would have to do. He had his taste of her. Now let him burn over it and be rejected.

"I can see that, Hargrove, I have eyes in my head you know." She



snapped in a pissy sarcastic tone.

"Well, princess, considering that statement, I think you're pretty blind to a lot of things." He wanted to cut her with his words like she had earlier and return the spite.

But even while he did it, it was hurting him to be so cruel to her. If only he could just shut off and not give a fuck. Ironically enough, he didn't give a fuck. That was the whole problem. He didn't get to show her everything he wanted to and now she was cutting him off. Virgins and his slightly dented moral compass be damned.

"No, Billy. You are. Tonight would have been nice. But it just can't last and you and I both know why. You don't understand, okay? Just... do us both a favor and pretend I don't even exist. Maybe that will make things easier when you have some other girl riding you tomorrow. Make sure you think of me and how good I felt and tasted to you tonight while doing it so it gets even more under your skin to help you avoid me. If you truly care about me you will do that for me."

The stinging remark, her cold dismissal of him, and her immediate assumption of what he would do with another girl hit him hard and sharp. Like the arrow she put in his heart once out of love and care now had poisoned him. Before he could say anything in response, she opened the door and left his car walking briskly back to her house holding her body shivering in the cold crisp night air.

She had been so pissed at him and eager to go she had left her black purse in his car. Fuck. He would have to either return it himself or give it to one of her friends to do it, but if one of them saw he had it and he said something, they would know he was with her tonight. That went against her callous wishes. Or, he could just hold onto it for her in his room and use it as bait to make her come back and see him long enough to claim it. Maybe once she cooled down.

He watched her go and leaned his forehead forward onto his steering wheel. When she disappeared inside before he could call her to get her purse, he slammed his fists against the wheel cursing several times and letting some of his rage and steam off out of her presence. All the emotions and turmoil she had stirred up inside of him were

exploding and he couldn't hold back his anger and frustration.

What had been a beautiful and sensual night full of passion and desire had now been turned into something venomous and bitter. She had twisted his heart all up and left him wanting more of her. He just couldn't understand why she was doing this or why he felt this way because of it.

But even in all of this, he had a trace amount of clarity that the only reason he was pissed was because he must be truly falling for her. He must be. Why else would this hurt so badly? He sat still and released his grip on the wheel allowing himself to bask in this new feeling.

He would just have to try even harder and keep chasing her. He would have to make her want him even more than he discovered she wanted him earlier. And he would have to make himself impossible for her to ignore and forget him, even if it meant pressing his body against her and taking her kisses for himself reminding her of what he could offer should she stay with him.

Mandy wouldn't win and he wasn't going to give up. Not now. Not ever. But first he would have a little fun with her and rile her up like he knew he could. Make her truly regret. Then when she was crushed he would sweep her up in his arms and make her accept the claim he had laid upon her that day.

He turned off his car, yanked his keys out, and slammed his door not caring if he woke up Neil, Max, or Susan, hell the whole damn household. But he decided to sneak into his room from his window in the back to avoid them all the same. Once he was out of his clothes and only in his boxers he lay in bed staring at the ceiling unable to sleep. Just what the fuck was going on? Why did he care? Why did he still want her?

If Mandy wanted to avoid him, that was her problem, right? She didn't know a good thing when it was in her grasp. But was he good for her? Maybe she was too good for him... maybe she was right and he was truly nothing to her at all. What business did a good wholesome girl have with a bad boy like him? He ran his tongue over his lips remembering the taste of her and almost instinctively put his hands down his boxers, tracing his happy trail slowly, to please



## **20. Headgames - The Rebound**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

### **HEADGAMES - THE REBOUND**

#### **Summary:**

Billy and Mandy are both torn by the wrecking of last night's connection and how bitterly it ended. Mandy is trying to conceal her pain but her friends sense something is up. Billy is determined to make her regret pushing him away and avoiding him once more.

Tucker sweeps in trying to be the rebound guy which makes Billy insanely jealous. He too has his ways to try and make Mandy jealous to further his hold on her using any girl he can, most notably Tina.

Tommy catches on to Billy and that he is wrapped around Mandy's finger putting two and two together but Billy attempts to fake like he couldn't care less so word won't get around.

If he denies it Tommy may come after her again trying to go

after her. If he convinces them then it will find it's way back to Mandy that he didn't keep their secret. Tommy is still sore about being whooped by Billy like a dog but still pretends to be loyal to him as if he is past it.

Billy has to walk the middle line but it's hard. He just can't stay away from her trying to find a way to get near her on campus. Tommy overhears Mandy telling Nikki the claim was a sham and renews his interest in trying to find how he can have his way with her.

Mandy announces she will go on a date with Tucker agreeing to it right in front of Billy to try and drive home the point to him she is done and moving on, which spurns him badly. He acts fast trying to make her think twice about her decision. The date night gets pretty hot and heavy with a big surprise...

NOTES:

Whoo! A lot going on in this one. Sorry if it's too long. ;)

Goodness I tried so hard not to make this so damn pornographic. I hope we haven't all lost respect for Mandy in so doing. But I really love how this came out and I really tried to keep it sensual and not just straight up nasty. Forgive me! LOL

.....

Mandy woke up the next morning having puffy eyes from crying all night over what happened between her and Billy. She had laid in bed for hours, clutching her pillow and sobbing, wishing it was him pressed against her shuddering body. She tried to be quiet so her family wouldn't hear her distress. Her heart was breaking and she wished she didn't have one so it couldn't hurt. She was proud, however, and wouldn't wear it on her sleeve for anyone let alone Billy Hargrove.

*"I need you, Mandy."* She mocked his words to her last night in an endless stream.

*"Claim your prize, Mandy."* She narrowed her eyes angrily.

*"You smell so fucking pretty, Mandy."* Rolling them and sighing she wanted to scream.

She looked into the vanity mirror and almost laughed out loud and how absurd he was and how stupid she had been to fall for those lines. She had lost herself in him and over cheap little oneliners and flirty nonsense he most likely practiced in his mirror for all the girls he flirted with.

She truly was nothing special to him. Just another potential lay. Still, she recalled how he had stopped once she had told him she had never before slept with a guy. How he had restrained himself and had not pressured her to go any further in that area. Why would he care since all he was about was to get in a girls pants and sleep with her anyway saying anything to do it? She would imagine he had banged lots of silly little virgins in the backseat of his Camaro who were over their heads for him and had fallen for his sweet talk crap.

While getting ready for school she had dug into the makeup she and Nikki had bought and pulled out the concealer that matched the shade and tone of her fair skin. Applying it just as Nikki had taught her under her eyes and blending it, she would attempt to cover all traces of the effect Billy was having on her.

Inside she was a mess but on the outside she would never let him or anyone else know. She would be damned before she would have Billy see just how upset she was over him and would never give him the upper hand of knowing it. He had a habit of staring at her in first period all day so the least she could do was play the part and appear normal. It would most likely piss him off to know he couldn't get to her anymore.

Dressing in her usual nerdy baggy clothes attempting to make herself as unattractive to him as possible she wore a dorky sweater and a long drab skirt with leggings underneath it. She sighed knowing that wouldn't stop him. If she dressed sexy he was switched on. If she was dressed nerdy and covered, he would still imagine her body under those clothes and get switched on. She just couldn't win!

She grumbled and chose not to put her hair in long pigtails the way he liked which was why he called her that damn name all the time.

Instead she opted for a long ponytail and braided. She pushed her dorky glasses back on her face and refused to put on makeup. She was half tempted to paint her face like a clown but no margin of embarrassment was worth pushing him away. It would most likely work but she would be humiliated.

Oh well, he was going to tell the entire student body about their little adventure last night soon enough anyway. And by the whole student body she meant Tommy and Carol who would do all the work for him.

Last night she had showered off his scent from her body trying to forget just how much he had left his mark on her at Lover's Lake. It was when looking in her bathroom mirror after bathing that she noticed the little light purple hickies and red marks he had made with his teeth and lips when biting and sucking on her neck last night. Great... just more concealer she would have to use and possibly wearing a scarf too.

Thank God, it was getting close to Winter time so no one would think twice about it. Only her close friends would notice since she didn't normally wear scarves. Anything was better than showing up marked all to hell by Billy Hargrove for the entire school to see and whisper about. She bet he would be damn well pleased with himself if he saw the marks too and would laugh at her with his asshole friends.

This gave her PLENTY of "incentive" as he had put it to give him the cold shoulder and really make him pay for what he had done to her. How dare he make her want him, then trick her into doing things with him, and then act like HE was wounded when she wanted to break it off? It was heading in that direction anyway.

Picking up her bookbag she sighed wishing this day was already over with. She hoped to whatever God was listening that when she arrived at Hawkins High parking lot his car would be parked somewhere else, any where else, and that he wouldn't be stringing along a girl just to have a lame go and digging under her skin in retaliation.

The one thing she dreaded almost more than running into him was having to tell Nikki what happened on the "date" and just what she would say. Nikki had no idea of her plans to semi seduce him and

then toss him to get even. Her guess was she actually thought there was something going on between them. She would happily crush that and stamp it out before it got out of control like a wildfire burning everything in it's path.

Mandy said good morning to her folks and hugging Calvin but rushed out the door before they could ask her any questions. She wasn't entirely sure if they had heard her sobbing late into the night and early morning. She didn't want to remember or be probed about it.

Taking a deep breath she opened the front door and stepped out into the morning sunshine prepared to make her long walk down Old Cherry Road towards the high school. Her eyes darted across the street as if on impulse and she noticed his car was not there. He had most likely taken off early and angry not wanting to run into her to take his little stepsister Max along giving her a ride to Hawkins Middle. She sighed with relief and made her trek to her destination trying to forget last night and move past it.

.....

Billy awoke to the sounds of Neil having a conniption fit in the kitchen. He was angry at Billy coming home so late, so he hadn't been as stealthy as he thought when climbing into his bedroom window last night.

Susan was trying to quell him as she made breakfast but to no avail. He rubbed his eyes and groaned knowing he would have to put up with his father's shit today. But inside he had felt that being with Mandy was worth it. Even if he got a black eye from his insane father over wanting to be with her. He got up and picked out his clothes for the day and on his way to the bathroom he pounded on Max's bedroom door.

"Hurry up and get ready, shitbird! Don't make us both late, understand? Or you can skateboard yourself to school!"

He was moody and aggressive today and usually when angry he would take it out on Max. Lately because of Mandy's softness rubbing off on him he hadn't been antagonizing Max in a good long while.



She had called him on it saying he was acting strange and he would just shrug it off and tell her to enjoy it while it lasted. One time she had almost pinned the tail right on the proverbial donkey in pointing out that she thought it was due to him spending so much time with their neighbor across the way. Billy gave her a death stare which had made her shrink back in the passenger seat regretting she had even said it.

She had softly told him she liked Mandy and wished she could see more of her but when he turned up his stereo cranking the music, Max got a scowl on her face and dropped it. He would do anything he could to keep her out of his private business. Who he saw and liked was none of her concern and she could just keep her nose in her own private life. Her nerdy little friends and her nerdy little trips to the Arcade.

"Alright!" Max yelled in response and he could hear her shuffling around to hurry up not wanting to be left behind.

On his way to the shower trying to avoid his father, Neil heard him as he tried to walk with soft slow footsteps and called him in to the kitchen. Billy closed his eyes and swore under his breath. Time for the usual shitshow.

"Billy. Get your ass in here, now!" He could practically see Neil's face red as a tomato and Susan nervously trying not to drop things while preparing his breakfast out of her nervous tension around him.

"Yes, sir." He said trying to make sure he could hear him loud and clear so as to not set him off even more than he already was.

Walking into the kitchen he stood before the kitchen table rigid and proper and waited for the inevitable. He braced himself and looked his father in the eyes. Neil was drinking his coffee, most likely spiked with whiskey, with one hand while his other one wrapped his knuckles on the table. Susan tried to be all smiles serving up his plate but it was clear that she too was afraid of what might happen. Neil's unpredictability was what made him so frightening. His glare alone was enough to stop a cold blooded killer in their tracks.

"Where the hell were you last night?"

Billy closed his eyes forgetting himself for a moment but snapped them open to keep his respectful gaze locked onto Neil. He knew how he hated it when Billy wouldn't look him square in the eyes when speaking to him.

"I went out for a bit with my friends at the Quarry." He tried to lie smoothly. He didn't want to ever involve Mandy with his terrifying father if it could be avoided. The less they knew about each other the better, she had already seen enough of him when her family threw them that special dinner. He had never forgotten how Neil had laid into him under the radar and humiliated him in front of them in the most low key way possible.

"Don't lie to me, boy. You forget I know your every move in this house. I know when you're getting ready to bang whores and when you're getting ready to go out and get shitfaced with your troublemaker punk friends from school." Neil was already getting redder.

"When you prance around in your room like some fucking pansy assed faggot in front of your mirror and dumping cologne in your trousers it's pretty damn obvious. It's a miracle you haven't gotten one of those bitches you see pregnant yet. Last thing I need is some slut coming to our house demanding money for child support. As if Susan and I don't have enough bills to pay for in this house!"

Billy tried very hard not to flinch at the awful term he had taken a sick liking of calling him for years ever since he was little and used to play with dolls instead of toy cars like Neil felt he should.

It had been one of those arguments that lead to an explosive fight between him and his real mother so many years ago. She never approved of him calling Billy that awful word. She had stepped in and tried to protect him and it was the last time she attempted it when Neil had backhanded her so hard he almost broke her jaw. He was never enough of a man for his father and yet whenever he landed the ladies successfully, even that wasn't enough to prove he was one to him.

Most fathers would be slapping their sons on the back for being a lady killer and good looking, but not Billy's dad. He almost hated his

sons gorgeous L.A. California looks and he could never make him proud no matter what he did. Deep down he guessed Billy reminded himself a lot of when he was younger and wild and yet held it against him instead of feeling honored.

Billy supposed he would spend the rest of his life trying to get validation from his father unless he could move out on his own and never see or speak to him ever again so long as they both lived. He often thought about running away but a part of him felt responsible for Max, even though he detested her, and he didn't want to leave her behind to become Neil's new punching bag. She was a useless annoying shitbird but she didn't deserve that.

"You should stop focusing so much on fucking everything that walks on two legs with a vagina and focus more on your school work. I'm not paying for your college tuition as there isn't enough for both you and Max. So unless you get your grades up properly and keep up with your basketball games, I doubt you would even get into one. Stop sneaking in late and stop lying to me or there will be hell to pay. You hear me? Now get ready and get the hell out before you make Max late for school."

He had sipped his coffee gritting his teeth at the taste of strong whiskey and Billy could practically smell it on him as he picked up the paper ignoring his son once more. He hadn't even let Billy get a single word in. Billy expected no less.

Not enough funds for both him and Max for college? Maxine Mayfield. There it was. Maybe that's why he and Max were always on such rocky ground with one another. Why they never bonded. Why they both hated each other so much.

It wasn't fair. She was the little princess that never did anything wrong and got everything she wanted. Neil had never laid a hand on her to date for her bullshit and yet he was the constant fuck up of the household. Even when she snuck out to see her stupid shithead friends, or the Lucas Sinclair boy, or stayed out late making him get in trouble for bringing her home at hours that Neil punished him for, he still got all the blame for it.

But God forbid, Billy should want to go out with his friends, party,

and come home at whatever hour he pleased. God forbid, he should want to go out with a girl and release all the tension Neil piled onto him in the only truly relaxing way he knew how. Drinking was fun. Partying was fun. Getting into fights was fun. But getting laid was the best for relieving all the stress he felt.

Damn him for being so soft and afraid of hurting or pressuring Mandy that they didn't get to go all the way like he truly wanted to. He knew it was right to not push for it and to respect her boundaries, but he felt the biggest regret of not getting at least something in return from her for how his mouth sang into her last night. He made all the right moves and even then she shut him down and went cold on him.

"You're dismissed. Go shower that shit off of yourself and get ready for school or I'll drive you there myself and take the Camaro for a whole month! See how many date nights you can get then without it!"

He wouldn't do it. Billy knew that. The car was a slave machine he could use to control Billy with Max. Neil said his empty yet billowing threat while looking up at him over the paper angrily. He said it firmly as if Billy was his wayward soldier and his father was his drill sergeant. Obviously, since Billy hadn't even moved, he was getting annoyed fast at him still standing there.

"Yes... Sir."

Billy ground out through his teeth trying to keep his voice calm and not show Neil that he was getting pissed off and had enough of his shit. Missing out on being laid was a part of his edginess but Neil's craptastic way of belittling him was fully to blame. It wouldn't do any good to argue. His father would just let his fists do the talking and would finish it. Neil always finished it.

Man, once he won her back and had her in his arms again with his mouth all over her, Mandy would owe him big time and would definitely be asked to repay the favor somehow someday. He remembered her beautiful body in that dress and how she had smiled up at him with stars sparkling in her deep green eyes and it almost soothed him so he could unclench his fists.

Walking away from Neil and the table ignoring Susan's sad soft looks at him as she served his father, Billy went to go take his shower. Standing in the shower stall he caught himself almost not wanting to clean himself off of Mandy's smell. He longed to take in the scent of her hair again and kiss her in all the places he didn't have a chance to last night. The smell of her perfume still lingered on his skin and he had no idea when he would ever be able to indulge himself in that again considering how she had pushed him away last night seemingly for good.

Once he was done he dressed up presentable and yelled for Max to hurry up or he would leave her behind. The cocky little shit knew he wouldn't because his father had just grilled him about making sure she got to school on time so it was a pointless hollow threat. Walking outside he sat outside by his Camaro smoking and waiting for her to get her shit together.

What burned him up even more than his cigarette is that Max heard how Neil talked to him every day and every night. She knew all of his deep dark secrets of the constant abuse. If she ever stopped fearing him and turned on him, she could easily tell her little friends and spread it all around the school grounds. Another reason why he had to be so ruthless to her to keep her in line and scared of him.

Longingly, he gazed across the street at Mandy's house, checking her window first then the front yard, and tried to see if she was home. Her window was shut and her blinds closed as well. If he left early enough maybe he could get out of here before she would come walking out her front door so she wouldn't see him. She wouldn't be too thrilled and it wasn't like he had time to stop and smell the flowers with her or work on things between them.

Max finally ran out with her skateboard tucked under her arm and practically threw herself into his passenger side slamming his door.

"Easy on my fucking car, shitbird." He snapped at her uncontrollably while muttering a long line of curse words aimed both at her and at Neil.

She sunk down into her seat and was clearly pissed at having to be in the same cramped space with him for the ride every day. The feeling

was mutual. Her reaction to riding with him almost reminded him of how Mandy had acted last night when she rode with him back from the lake.

He kept his steely cold eyes on the road head gripping the wheel after he cranked his tunes up so Max didn't have a chance to ask why Mandy wasn't riding with them today. He had become so used to picking her up and dropping her off now that to have Max in the front instead of the back seat and not be able to look over at Mandy was really messing with his head. He really didn't owe the shithead any explanations and was still roiling over Neil's verbal accusations this morning.

At least he hadn't hit him this time or broke something over his head like he did last weekend. Susan almost had to take him to the ER for a concussion but Neil had told her to mind her own damn business as Billy had drug himself into his room to lay down and recover.

When he pulled up into the lot and yelled at Max to get out of his sight and go to class, Tommy and Carol were waiting for him out front. He scanned the lot looking for Mandy but she was nowhere to be found so he assumed she had somehow gotten here earlier than him and was already done with her locker and sitting in first period.

"Hey, Billy." Carol greeting him twirling her hair and popping her gum.

Tommy ignored the obvious. Ever since they split up Tommy didn't really give a shit who Carol was banging or interested in. He had pursuits of his own. But as part of the guy code that even Billy followed he didn't touch her and he didn't want to.

Billy locked his car up and pulled out a cigarette offering one to Tommy who took it from him gratefully. One thing he could count on was Tommy's ability to fall in line and respect his authority as Alpha in their pack. The beatdown he had given him last week reminded him of his place and while his bruises, cuts, and swollen face had healed rather nicely, Billy knew the real damage was to his ego. He needed to be knocked down a peg and to be kept in line so he would stay away from Mandy. He would make sure he would still leave her be or he would give him another thrashing.

"So... Billy, you look pissed off more than usual today. I assume your little date didn't go over so well with the cherry? Did she give you blue balls or somethin'?"

Tommy grinned widely, unnaturally, and laughed but truly had no idea just how close he was to actually being right. Still, Billy would deny it. It was none of his concern.

"You know that's not an issue for me, fuckhead, with or without Mandy or any other girl for that matter. I'm sure I get more action in one day than you've seen in months."

Carol couldn't help but laugh at that, ever the faithful smitten lapdog, even if it was Tommy he was insulting. Her humor at him being roasted made Tommy glare at her for a moment then he turned back to Billy. He soon recovered his freckle-faced joker's smile and began to probe as he smoked the cigarette like it was a peace pipe for Billy smashing his face in previously over his unwanted ungranted advancements on her. Tommy knew he couldn't hide that he actually had a thing for her. Billy could deny it as much as he wanted. Mandy wasn't putting out for him, that was a sure thing.

"Well, after what you told me, it would seem you're banging Amanda Hawkins so why do you look so sour and unsatisfied? You get all up in that yet or what? The little bet we made demands you clarify to me. Yes or no? Got those wet panties for me yet?"

He found his obsessive interest in her underwear and what he personally did with Mandy, bet or no bet, to be annoying at best and disturbing in the least. He had forgotten all about it but obviously Tommy would not let it go and wanted to see it through. As to why it mattered so much to someone like him, since fifty bucks wasn't a whole lot of cash, he couldn't understand.

It was also painfully obvious Tommy wanted a piece of Mandy for himself. He had seen that by how he had hounded her around campus before he stepped in to stop it. His body and blood still burned over seeing him corner her that day and how he had his hands all over her.

Tommy was as transparent as glass that he was the one who was sour

over Billy's claim and for stepping in between them, not to mention kicking his ass for drugging her at the party. But he knew as long as he had his claim up he wouldn't dare touch her as long as Billy was around and the new King of Hawkins High.

Carol nodded eager for him to supply her with new ammo most likely for the girls locker room. She was such a blabbermouth and a complete bitch. She exemplified everything about females like her that really turned him off. Every chance she got, Carol tried to tear Mandy apart in front of her friends and he was almost positive it had been her spreading the rumors in his name that had upset rabbit so much.

"Maybe I am. Maybe I'm not. You're on a need to know basis with anything I do around here and you simply don't need to know shit about that or what she and I do. All you need to know is to keep away from her as she is my property now. The bet can wait. I still have until graduation as you sid. You'd do well to remember how my fists knocked into your teeth if you even think of disobey me on that and start in with her. That goes double for you, Carol."

Carol nodded out of habit knowing she was under his rule too. The next thing he would do would be to silence her from talking shit about Mandy to her circle of friends and causing her unnecessary damage on the campus. Fuck, it pissed him off to even think he was now a bully who was bullying other bullies to get them to stop bullying. The whole thing was insane. Why did he even fucking care? Was Mandy that good that it made him feel he wanted to change up from how he usually did things?

For a moment Tommy glared at him losing his smile at his threat but then he recovered it as his mouth twitched slightly for a few seconds. He obviously wanted to fight Billy again and try his luck a second time. Despite his fear and respect of him, it was almost like he could see right through Billy's bullshit.

However, he looked like he was about to drop it and it would truly be for his own good if he did. As soon as Tommy opened his mouth again Billy squeezed his eyes shut angrily while working on his smoke he just lit up. He would have been smarter to keep his fat mouth shut then to say what he said next in Billy's presence, as



fuming mad as he was right now over last night with Mandy and over Neil this morning.

"Whatever, man. Whatever you say, Cherry King. You just let me know when you're done with her, yeah? I don't mind tainted sloppy seconds..."

Carol's eyes went wide, not just out of anger at his brazen comment, but also knowing if Tommy didn't stop he might wind up in the E.R. if Billy tore into him again with a vengeance. It was too late. He had heard and registered the remark and was shaking with anger.

Before Tommy could take another drag on his cigarette, this earned him a quick flash of rage from Billy who turned on him swiftly grabbing him by his shirt collar and backing him up against the hood of his Camaro roughly. He would slam him but he didn't want to dent the car up over a worthless worm like Tommy H.

He had his own cigarette just inches from Tommy's eye, holding it there and holding him as steady as possible, while he struggled underneath him not wanting to get burned by the hot end of it. It was so close he could feel it making his eye begin to water but he held still so Billy wouldn't make a mistake and slip up pushing it into his eye. Tommy panicked pleading like a pussy for him to let him go. He was quickly forcing out apology after apology and whimpering while putting his hands up as if he was just joking about what he said.

"Take it easy, Billy. I... I didn't mean anything by it. Honest. I'm sorry. I take it back! I'm sorry!"

Carol had this look of disgust for how pathetic Tommy was pinned underneath Billy. She tried to get them to separate but didn't want to get too much in the middle of it in case Billy turned on her next. He grit his teeth at Tommy putting his face just inches from his while still keeping the cigarette trained on his eye and scowling, his mouth hanging open like a hungry lion, strong maw eager to rip and shred.

"Watch it, asshole. Or I won't just knock your eyeballs out of your fuckin' head, Tommy, I'll burn them out. Would be a total waste of one of my smokes to use it on you like that but so be it. Or... you can be a smart boy and keep your personal comments along with your

hands and mouth away from Mandy as well. Or I'll make it happen and you'll be wearing an eye patch for graduation, you hear me?"

He growled at him gripping harder almost choking him with his strong hand and then let go of Tommy's collar backing up slowly with a ferocious look on his face when he nodded in understanding. His fight or flight was fully activated should Tommy get jumpy with him just in case. He never felt more mean with anyone than just now with Tommy over Mandy.

Carol went from shocked and worried to attempting to hide how impressed she was by the show of Billy's brute strength. She looked mildly turned on by it and quickly shut herself off but not before he noticed it. God, she was such an easy slut. That's often why he wanted no part of her despite how often she came onto him. Too easy never did anything for him. He liked a solid challenge when chasing someone and Mandy was every inch a challenge. So much so that it caused him physical pain from his need to win her over and be with her. He WOULD win her back no matter the cost.

Tommy didn't have to know shit about last night's disaster and could keep on thinking they were going steady and that he was working on that bet. Even if he used Tina again to make her regret her decision last night he would still make it clear to Tommy that Mandy belonged to him and no one else.

"Aye, aye, captain." Tommy saluted him swallowing hard while fixing his collar and then returned to his former smiling self after a few minutes of nervous ticks. Billy wanted to punch the cowardly smirk right off of his face. Again.

He locked up his car and walked towards the school entrance snapping his fingers only once. Both Tommy and Carol fell in line following him inside. Billy flicked his cigarette behind him and Tommy put his out on another student's car not really giving a shit about destruction of private property.

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*So... what happened last night? Are you okay? You look like you've been crying. Was he just that good? Ohmygosh, tell me, plz!*

Nikki's note that she had passed to Mandy discreetly in first period made Mandy sigh not wanting to remember last night as she had read it. She crumpled it up and put it in her book bag shaking her head to her. Nikki frowned deeply at her unwillingness to share.

Her note had been written with a confused sad face drawn on it and little hearts and question marks. Although Nikki was frowning she also couldn't hide her eagerness for the juicy details.

Facedeskings, Mandy wished she hadn't told her over the phone that she was going on the date he had harassed her for over three months for just to shut him up about it so he would leave her alone. It had been Nikki who taught her the concealer trick for sad puffy eyes too so obviously the makeup was a tip off to her that she had been upset over something.

Mandy gave her a passive look and tried to shrug as if it had been nothing with not much to tell. Nikki rolled her eyes still waiting but looking at Watkins to make sure he was not paying attention to them. Mandy slowly and quietly behind her textbook passed another one also checking to make sure Billy wasn't watching. He was sleeping at his desk with his book up to hide it, as he did sometimes, but she could not be sure if he was truly tired or faking it and just spacing out.

*Nothing. We went to the movies and it was boring as hell. There's nothing to talk about. It's done and over with.*

She lied in response and passed her note back to Nikki through their usual middle man contact who grumbled at being the messenger yet again.

Before Nikki could ask more questions as Mr Watkins droned on about Mercutio and Tybalt's showdown over the blood feud between the Montague's and the Capulet's and cleared his throat to make sure people were paying attention.

Nikki somehow just knew that Mandy wasn't being straight with her when she saw Billy peek over his textbook and stare with his feral blue eyes locked onto Mandy. When he looked at her she turned her gaze to the chalkboard as if she didn't even acknowledge he was

there at all. He kept looking and Nikki saw there was a problem here but looked up while trying to guess what it could be.

Mandy could smell him, his wonderful usual scent, from behind her and it brought back unwanted memories of her night with him. Would he leave her be or would he continue to hassle her like this? She was sure she made it very clear to him while driving back that she did this on purpose to push him away and make him stop.

Nikki looked between the two of them back and forth and then suddenly gave a knowing expression on her chipper face. Something was up and she could see it in the tension between the two of them. So no doubt Nikki was now picturing that Mandy had done things with Billy last night and was putting two and two together, however inaccurate it would be.

When Mandy wouldn't confirm with a glance back at her, she finally shrugged figuring her moody friend would tell her when she felt ready to. But it was so easy to see that she was just DYING to know everything.

She had noted Mandy's dorky appearance was extra geeky and layered today so it was obviously her trying to keep Billy off of her so he wouldn't stare. Regardless, he was looking.

*Juliet: I'll look to like if looking liking move.*

It was the only line that kept running through her mind over and over the more she noticed Billy would not stop focusing on her. He was even chewing on the end of his pencil again making it obvious that he wanted Mandy but was resolved to staying quiet behind her.

Mandy eventually got so upset at his eyes flooding over her that she stopped glancing back and wouldn't even deign to return his stares. Whenever he tried to whisper to her using that familiar nickname he was so fond of using, she ignored him as if she were deaf.

"Pssst." He tried to get her attention but she wouldn't budge. She just kept writing notes as if he wasn't there.

"Pssst. Hey... rabbit." It hurt her to hear him say that to her.

He finally gave up for the rest of the period when she wouldn't acknowledge him not even to tell him to piss off or get angry with him. Nikki noticed his face fall for a bit and she could tell something had definitely happened.

After first period was over Mandy rushed quickly out of class to her locker. Nikki trailed behind her looking at Billy just sitting with a look of defeat on his strong face and shrugging at him in sympathy. He looked forlorn, burned out tired, and lost, but he had traces of an annoyed scowl on his face. He took time to leave the room after them letting Mandy go first.

"What's up with you and Hargrove? I thought everything was going good? Did you guys even have a good time?" Nikki said searching her friend's annoyed yet sad face for answers.

"Did something go wrong? Did he hurt you? Are you okay?" Nikki kept probing with a neverending stream of curiosity and concern for the wellbeing of her friend.

Mandy slammed her locker door after getting the books she needed and whirled to face Nikki. She didn't want to be mean to her because she knew she was just being a good concerned friend. Mandy pushed her glasses up higher on her nose and stiffened when Billy walked out of the classroom, took one look at her, then walked on past to his next class.

"Nothing. I'm fine, alright? Look it's just not that serious. It doesn't matter. Nothing happened."

She said this a little bit too defensively. As she began to walk to her next period, Nikki fell in step with her trying to just be a good listener in case she wanted to talk about it.

"Well... after the way he kicked Tommy's ass for grabbing you basically forcing himself on you and then dragging him out into the hall saying you were his claiming you, I would assume there is very much something definitely going on. Did you two have a fight? A lover's spat? How was Lover's Lake by the way?" Nikki pressed on and on and it finally made Mandy snap almost wanting to throw her books down on the ground.

"There is no claim, okay!? It was a lie. All of it. It was only done to keep Tommy away from me. Nothing more nothing less. It was all pretend. Billy and I are just... well, no, we're not even friends, got it?"

Nikki's eyes grew wide at her outburst and she stopped for a minute. It made Mandy feel guilty about to apologize when she saw the gears turning in Nikki's head yet again.

"You mean... Billy actually cared enough about you to not only bring you home safely and keep an eye on you at Tina's party, but also to keep that rotten ass Tommy from putting his hands all over you? Please don't be mad at me for saying this but... are you stupid? He's obviously crazy for you."

Mandy sighed.

"This is for the best, Nik. Trust me on this. It's not going anywhere."

The gears were still grinding and clicking away in Nikki's head and Mandy let out a slow breath not wanting to discuss it anymore. She knew her friend had a point. Billy cared. But she didn't want to care that he cared.

"Why not? I think he really likes you, Mandy. You shouldn't shut him out like this. I've noticed he hasn't even so much as touched another girl ever since that night at the Halloween party."

At that exact moment, they both saw Tina approach Billy obviously seeing how upset he was in the hall and trying to cheer him up as they began talking. She hooked her arm in his and Billy returned the gesture letting his brooding look be replaced with the biggest false smile she had ever seen him wear. He looked back at Mandy though with his deep blue eyes, full of questions for her, but then turned away and kept walking.

"You were saying?..."

Mandy trailed off getting an eyeful of them flirting with one another as if they had never stopped. Nikki saw it too and looked back to her friend all protests to the contrary frozen on her lips.

"He doesn't look very happy with Tina like he looked with you. I can

see it in his eyes and how he holds himself around her. Can't you?"

Mandy shrugged numbing herself to all of it. Nikki hugged her and tried her best to comfort her.

"I hope you are right about this, Mandy. But it feels like it's the wrong decision. I'll trust your judgement on it anyway and that you know what's best for you, girl."

Looking back at Tina and Billy, Mandy felt her heart quicken and lose it's steady tempo. It almost felt like it was being ripped out of her chest cavity. She grimaced making the feeling pass.

So what? Tina could have him. She'd only been itching to ride him since the first day he got here. She didn't care anymore. But deep down both Mandy and Nikki knew that she did. Nikki sighed and touched her arm gently and sympathetically while walking her partway to her next class saying she would talk to Mandy at lunch.

Although she couldn't deny that a huge hole had been ripped into her seeing that little display between them, but she would bury it and act like it didn't mean a damn thing.

Not too far from where they were and hidden behind a classroom door, she had no idea that Tommy had been hanging back listening to their conversation when she had confessed that her and Billy weren't a thing. He grinned when he witnessed Billy latch onto Tina as it had confirmed his suspicions. He turned a different way so Mandy wouldn't see he had been tailing her and eavesdropping now knowing the truth.

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By the time lunch had rolled around Mandy almost decided she was going to go to the library to help Mrs Bannister. She stopped cold in her tracks while making her way there knowing that her secret hiding spot was no longer a secret from Billy since the day Tommy had practically assaulted her there. She didn't want either of them being able to corner her there and regretted that she couldn't trust her own safe space anymore.

Instead, she opted to get her lunch from the cafeteria as fast as she could and to hang out with her friends outside at whatever table she found them at. Somewhere Billy would not think her to be and a place she had never before seen him occupy.

Alex and Tucker were sitting down tossing food into each other's mouths and laughing immaturely while doing it. Nikki was watching them commenting on it and how childish they were while laughing. When she saw her approach she jumped up to greet her with a sad but comforting hug and she took her place with them happily. She was doing everything she could to convince Nikki she was fine but she knew that her cover was already blown and full of holes just as her insides felt.

"Hey, Mandy! How are you... whoah, what's with the scarf?" Alex said noticing the thick material wrapped around her neck. Tucker looked just as confused but Nikki kept her knowing look while keeping her mouth shut. She couldn't hide her grin at the scarf. Mandy flushed betting she knew exactly why it was there.

"Oh, it's nothing. Just a really cold day today is all. Figured I would bundle up."

She lied and kept her eyes on her tray unable to say it while looking in their eyes. She didn't want them to know about the marks of ownership Billy had left on her from last night. Tucker would blow a fuse.

"So... Mandy. Is it true that you and Billy aren't... you know? I mean... yeah."

Tucker asked trailing off being shy about even talking about it. He was obviously dying to hear it from her own lips for confirmation. He stared longingly at her the same as he did the night he climbed through her window and it made her stomach lurch. Weren't they past all of this by now? Mandy rolled her eyes and leaned in to whisper sharply into Nikki's ear.

"Nikki, Jesus, I just told you that not even more than two classes ago. Why are you encouraging him?"



Nikki simply blew a bubble with her gum impishly and grinned at her looking over to how Tucker was looking at Mandy. She followed her friend's eyes to him and saw it too. Saw the desperation and the care he held a place for in his heart for her. It was like Billy's look for her only less hungry and wild. His was a gentle need. Tame. Like a total loyal puppy who just wanted the smallest bit of affection from her.

*Oh, God. Nikki is trying to set me up with a rebound. With one of my very own best friends! Ugghh.*

Tucker came over and sat closer to Mandy almost as if on signal from their wordless exchange back and forth. She wouldn't give a straight answer on what he asked her so he just naturally assumed it was true.

"Well... I mean. I'm sorry. If that is the case."

*No, he isn't. Now he just wants to move in and offer himself to me again.*

She thought to herself not really knowing what she was feeling but irritation was there. She was wanting to ram full speed into a wall and just knock herself out. Anything was better than dealing with all of this pain, confusion, misery, and the ever growing temptation to just scream out loud in front of half the school.

"Umm... if there's anything I can do to help, I'm here for you. You know that right?" Tucker was being overly and enamorously sweet on her because now he saw his opening and was going for it. So much for them becoming just friends again.

Just then Billy walked outside from the cafeteria and out to a table outside with his new girl Tina on his arm. He was looking as though he was hanging on Tina's every word while sitting with her, Tommy, and Carol. She noticed he didn't even touch his lunch. Most likely for the same reason Mandy wasn't bothering to touch hers. Things were too tense and her stomach ached. Risking another glance over for a second she noticed Tommy was looking at her intensely and making her feel uncomfortable once more with his drawn out grinning stare.

If Billy was with Tina, did that mean Tommy would no longer assume

that he was still with her and that his claim on her had finally expired? She swallowed a lump in her throat and felt her insides suddenly ice over going cold.

Her heart practically shattered, despite her attempts to not care, when she saw Tina and Billy laughing together and him kissing her on the neck. Kissing Tina like how he used to kiss her. She could feel his searing kisses on her own neck from the night before just watching the scene unfold between the two of them.

When Tina looked away to say something to Carol, Billy looked Mandy boldly in the eyes while still kissing Tina lightly on her shoulder. He fully knew what he was doing. It was all an act to try and spur her into jealousy to get her to approach him. She chose to ignore it and deny him the pleasure.

In that moment, something in Mandy snapped, and she decided that she could one up him on that too. If he wanted to try and dig into her, she would dig right back with something she knew would piss him off and get to him even more.

"Thanks, Tucker. So, you busy tonight after school? I'm not. How about we go out together, just you and I. Let's go out on a date tonight, yeah? Say... six or seven? Does that work for you?"

She said it NICE AND LOUD so Billy could hear every word, every syllable, clearly and without room for any personal interpretation which made him stop kissing on Tina and glare at her for a few moments. Good, he had heard it.

Tucker looked shocked at her asking him out and Alex and Nikki looked to one another as if to question what changed and what just happened? They looked like they fell through a crack into the Twilight Zone or that their two friends were pod people.

Alex mouthed the words 'what the fu-' and Nikki shook her head in response not able to answer. She hadn't actually thought Mandy was going to take up his offer or go that far. Reasoning within herself that Mandy must be well and truly pissed off at Billy after all, she didn't say a word and let Mandy do what she felt she needed to.

"Uhh... y-yeah. That would be awesome! Where do you want to go?"

Mandy thought about this and moved a little closer to Tucker laying her head on his shoulder flirtatiously. It was something she never thought in a million years she would ever do. Billy glared and looked like he wanted to stand up and march over to her. His eyes blazed with jealousy and Mandy grinned.

Tucker just looked like he was about to cream his pants over her being so close to him without warning. His breathing got more rapid and she heard him swallow nervously.

"Let's go to a movie! Whatever's playing. I'll be ready so pick me up whenever you are. Dress nice. Because I will."

She daringly placed a hand on Tucker's leg and he gasped softly at it nodding not daring to say anything.

Billy was smiling now but it was an angry grin stuck on his handsome possessive face. She had a feeling he knew what she was up to but the torment in his eyes was showing no matter how hard he tried to hide it from her. He saw her touching her friend and even dared to put a hand on his thigh while still leaning into him.

Tucker and her friends didn't even notice that she was looking at Billy while setting this up as they continued talking about what kind of movies were currently playing in the Hawk Cinema.

Tina was still jabbering on and on to Billy who had completely phased her out and gave Mandy a stern knowing look. His leg was bouncing slightly up and down and she could tell it was getting to him. She wanted it to. She wanted him to know just how much she would be moving on from him. Even if that meant being with one of her best friends and maybe even entertaining the thought of kissing him just to get the taste of Billy out of her mouth.

She was so spiteful that she was even almost tempted to spread her own rumor around the school. A biting rumor specially passed for Billy that Tucker had taken her cherry before he could, just to piss him off even more.

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Later after lunch Mandy was walking alone to her Biology class. As she passed an empty classroom she felt a pair of large rough hands grab her and pull her inside to the inky black darkness. She wanted to shout and start screaming but whoever grabbed her had clamped down on her mouth to keep her quiet once in the darkened room.

Using their other hand to strongarm her they had grabbed around her waist locking both her arms in front of her at her elbows so she couldn't escape. She was kicking and screaming unable to get away trying to bite the hand that clamped over her mouth but was unsuccessful at doing so.

Whoever it was that grabbed her finally let go putting her down near what appeared to be a big wooden desk and then moved quickly to barricade the door they entered behind them by putting a desk chair up against it just right. The figure stood in front of it so she couldn't run and kept the lights off making it hard for her to see very clearly or identify them.

At first Mandy's heart raced pounding in her throat fearing it was Tommy come to take her after seeing Billy all over Tina and that she was apparently no longer by his side.

"Tommy, I will scream bloody murder and hole punch you in the gonads, so help me God! Don't you come near me you jackass!"

She tried to pick up anything she could find at the desk near her to use as a weapon knocking things over in the dark on accident. She set to work looking for that hole puncher or even a stapler but sadly all she found was a short little pencil inside a metal wire cup and held it in front of her as if it could save her life. A deep low and gravelly voice laughed at how feisty yet hopeless she was and she almost recognized it immediately.

"Poor little princess. You really need to take some self defense classes, rabbit. Otherwise I will have to keep my eyes on you after all to make sure you don't get hurt. Foul language and bluffing with office supplies won't save you, that's for sure."

Once Mandy's eyes adjusted to the dim classroom she could make out a strong tall form and as it got closer she smelled the scent of mint gum and cigarettes mixed with a strong familiar cologne rich in spices and clover.

She dropped the useless tiny pencil and stood in shock. She had told him to stay away from her! Why the hell was he abducting her into a classroom to talk when he had just got done making his intentions with Tina very clear? She had to recheck herself on that. He wasn't here to talk, she knew that much.

"Billy! What are you... what the fu-"

Mandy had started to exclaim in anger but before she could finish he had closed the distance between them and moved fast up against her. As he moved in he began pushing her legs open a bit wider with his denim covered strong knee to take his rightful place there.

She whimpered softly feeling his warm wet lips kiss along her jawline tracing his tongue on her skin as he began hiking her skirt up quickly with his rough hands so he could get easier access to push into her. When he finally achieved this she could feel his growing bulge in his denim Levi's between her thighs. She halfheartedly tried to fight him off but couldn't move because of how good he felt nuzzling into her and letting his hands wander over her body.

Mandy gasped and her stomach fluttered at how forceful he was being with her. Dominant as ever while seducing her in the darkness. He wasn't listening to her at all, just all hands and mouth and desire for her. He felt her warmth and her curves that hid underneath her clothes with his hands sliding over the top of them and ground himself into her softness in the dark abandoned room. He groaned softly as he put his large hands on her thick hips moving her where he wanted her to be.

As he did this he was strategically backing her up slowly against the teacher's desk behind her to corner her with it, leaving her with no where to run from him. He quickly reached around her to the surface of the desk knocking everything of it with one fast swipe of his powerful arm. He had to clear it of all the items that would just be in their way and prevent him from doing what he planned to with her.

She heard all of it clattering to the ground which made her jump slightly as it did but it also gave her a burning thrill racing through her just over the simple idea of knowing the exact reason he did it. It was like the belt buckle but a million times more exciting and it made her lick her lips as her stomach burned hot for him.

He noticed the thick scarf she had on wrapped around her neck for the first time. He leaned in and pulled the scarf aside with his nimble fingers removing it completely and admiring his handy work on her. He grinned from ear to ear. She had tried to cover it up with makeup but it still shone through just as obvious as ever.

He was enjoying the looks of his hickies all over her tender pale flesh. He would do that everyday to her to show other guys she was his and his alone. It made him feel territorial and primal just thinking about it. He groaned as he felt himself start to get hard for her and tried to hold it back but with her being so close to him it was impossible.

Cupping her face in one hand as he moved in on her she felt her ass press into the front edge of the desk slightly as he leaned in slowly to put his mouth on where his marks were. He was taking what he felt was rightfully his, while the other one found its way to the small of her back so he could push her closer into him.

Panting soft and fast for her he closed in on her as if knowing exactly where to place his lips. It was as though he was merely going by the heat radiating from her since he was unable to see very well in the classroom. After taking her throat and kissing it passionately, he then pressed his hungry lips to her own. She barely kissed him back but didn't stop him from taking what he desperately wanted. He spoke to her, his breath labored, in between his strong kisses.

"Mandy... fuck, I need to feel you so bad. I've wanted to feel you ever since we left the lake. We never got to finish last night because you fell asleep on me, bad girl. My mouth must have been just that good, right baby?"

His familiarity with her stung but made her ache inside for him all the same. Listening to his beautiful voice it wasn't hard to pick up on how thick it was with his incurable lust. He was purposefully

reminding her of it, putting pictures in her head of how his wild skilled tongue had explored her under the stars beside the lake. She blushed but rather angrily at him while tearing her lips away from his. Being completely silent and still before him she was not giving him the slightest return for his efforts.

Billy growled at her in frustration over her silence and it was mixed with a long drawn out moan, a shudder of his body against hers, giving away his desperate need for her to respond to him. Because she didn't answer him, he picked her up from in front of the desk effortlessly and taking her by surprise, he then lifted her onto the now empty desk with his powerful arms in one swift action.

She could feel the warmth of his body get closer to hers when he moved his hands to the base of her skirt. Slowly pressing his groin into hers, she could feel his bulge in his Levi jeans intimately grinding away deliciously as it filled the space that was there before.

Her skirt was now up high enough to be at her thick lovely hips so he could open her legs more fully to him. His thick knee cap nudging in between them forcefully to move them apart. The way he moved up against her, as if he was taking his rightful place where he belonged, made her shiver with a dark longing she never knew was possible. It made her remember their date on the blanket and how he used that same trick when he pressed himself into her there too.

"Billy. No. Don't. Stop." Each word was punctured with a soft moan she couldn't control coming out of her mouth as his hands found their way up under her sweater and against her bra, gently fondling her perfectly sized breasts. A perfect handful for him was all he really needed and he wouldn't ask for hers to be bigger or smaller. It would be like slapping her creator in the face for making her just as she was meant to be.

She tried to choke out the words and make him obey her but her voice cracked and she couldn't deny she wanted him against her and touching all her secret places almost seemingly made just for him. Grinding into her he whispered her name softly into her ear and she gasped as her stomach fluttered. Deep down she loved his forceful way of making her want him. Making her completely his no matter how hard she tried to stop it.

"I know you don't want me to stop. I picked up on that as soon as I first touched you and kissed you." He laughed at how she had phrased her rejection of him making a teasing joke of it with his lips to her ear. Billy was nibbling on her soft lobe so delicately with his teeth. It was out in the open now along with her lovely neck fully exposed, the scarf on the floor, and because of her braided ponytail she chose today.

"Don't fight me, Mandy. I know how you like it, remember? You won't make the first move but I will, so don't test me. Mmmmm, I missed your smell so much. Vanilla. We'll have to change that one day, though."

She had no idea what he meant by that but it most likely tied into something sexual seeing as how it was coming from him. He grinned at her innocence on that rather kinky comment and then moaned even more knowing full well what it did to her while he touched her face tenderly. She froze as he began hovering his lips along her jawline trying to make his way to hers and capture her mouth again. Only this time he was lightly grazing them and poking between them playfully with his tongue.

As her eyes adjusted in the dark, his face to hers, she saw his lovely eyes closed, the view of them denied to her with his long lashes almost fluttering in pleasure. He was lost in her while taking her mouth for his own. When he finally opened them and pulled away from kissing her, she saw that they were glazed over with an intense need for her barely masking his lustful intentions. Shifting them upwards from her lips where his had just been to look into her eyes he smiled softly at her but also rather wickedly.

"I have a right to say no if I want to. You can't just... you can't..."

Would she really go as far as to suggest he was forcing her into something she herself didn't want? Her 'no' had been with words but her body had given consent to him as soon as he began.

His strong smooth chest was exposed by a few of his buttons being semi undone in his usual style and she couldn't help but place her soft hands on him there despite her protests. At first she was touching him there, gradually pressing into him, and then pushing lightly



away. But try as she might, shortly after she began pulling on his shirt out of sheer instinct unable to tell if she wanted him to release her or pull him further into her. She was beginning to feel absolutely fatigued and destroyed at trying so hard to fight him off only to find herself wanting him to give her more.

"Don't stop me. Don't say no. I need you, rabbit. Just let me touch you. I love how soft you are. I know you miss me touching you too."

His words seemed urgent as though he were in severe pain from not being able to touch her until now.

Not giving up he dipped his warm mouth to the underside of her chin, lifting it slightly and then holding her jaw steady as he kissed her there nonstop. He was nibbling her soft skin barely licking her from time to time with the tip of his tongue as he moved his other hand down to the opening of her bunched up skirt. He lifted it putting his hand inside and moved his rough yet steady hand up even higher making his way to her knee rather quickly. He enjoyed the feel of her and the leggings that covered her.

She moaned softly closing her eyes unable to fight him anymore while feeling him move his trailing tracing fingers to her knee cap, moving them in deliberate patterns to tickle her gently. This caused her to open her legs a little wider to allow him in even more as she trembled against him. He could both hear and feel she wanted him back even though she tried to resist. His hands just felt so good on her that her mind was going blank and forgetting most of the anger and frustration from last night between them when he took her home after their argument.

Inching his hand up slowly along her soft and shapely inner thigh he finally reached her apex where he began rubbing her slowly. He carressed her right through her leggings not bothering to slip his hand inside of them just yet in his mad haste to touch her. Rubbing her soft mound over the thin layer he was searching for purchase to slip one finger along her heated nethers and in between her folds but the leggings made this very hard to do.

Seeking her nub through her clothing instead, he pressed into where he could barely detect it, restrained by the very thin fabric and her

even thinner panties. He could feel her warmth as he explored her there, moving his fingers diligently while seeking out her core to rub it teasingly. He was doing this no doubt to intimately remind her of what he had done to her last night. His groaning deep voice was making her pant and gasp out his name against her will.

"Oh, please... no. Not there." She tried to push his hand away but he knew she liked it when he did this and that she was into it by the way she was blushing. He could read her body just not her mind. Sometimes he wished he could other times not so much.

Her hand flew to her mouth to cover her own traitorous words fully knowing that is where she wanted him most. She leaned forward resting her head on his chest and breathed in as he continued to rub and press into her over her clothes. He circled and rubbed slow at first then faster. He kept changing speeds and how hard he pressed to draw it out.

Laying against him like that she remembered just how damn good he always smelled to her and she almost gave in to him right there longing to tell him to pull her leggings down. She almost begged him to free her from the restrictive clothing so she could let him mold and manipulate her softness plially with his wonderful hand.

Billy was so good at it he almost drowned out all reason and logic with his demanding and dominating presence and how he touched her.

Hearing the noises she made he smiled into his kisses he left under her chin and then he lifted his mouth from nibbling it to lock another sultry stare into her deep green eyes knowing he had her right where he wanted her. Being honest with him with her body.

"Yes. Right here. Want me to pull these down so I can give you more?"

A devious smile played about the corners of his mouth his tongue barely poking out between his lips as he waited. She bit her lower lip knowing fully well what he meant and making him breathless seeing her do it. It made him want to be biting her lip instead and drawing it into his mouth. She covered her face with her hands once more to

try and hide it from him.

Once he managed to move her hand gently out of the way that blocked him from being able to kiss her, he recaptured her soft full lips anxiously. He had licked his own slowly before bringing his mouth down onto hers. As soon as their lips touched, she felt his tongue move against her own, parting the seam between eagerly so he could taste her once more with an even deeper kiss. After a brief moment of this, Mandy suddenly pulled away surprising him that she even wanted to.

"Billy. Don't, okay? I can't. This has to stop. Right now."

She was starting to realize just how much she had missed him since their argument last night. She quickly forced herself to block the painful thought of her need for him out.

"Why? You and I both know we want each other. Just stop resisting me and allow me to pleasure you. Last night was amazing but it doesn't have to stop there. Why fight it? I want you, Mandy, and only you."

That pissed her off. He guessed because of how he was using Tina to try and get her to chase him for once, but it wasn't a lie when he said that. She was who he wanted to be kissing like that, not any other girl. It was her mouth that drove him crazy and he wanted it constantly.

Mandy began to slap at his chest in futility out of her anger at him saying that. She didn't believe him. But he stayed put and didn't back down one inch despite her trying to stop him. He ignored her raining tirade of puny and pathetic hits to his rock solid chest. He didn't even really feel it and it didn't slow him down.

"Bullshit. You have Tina, remember? God, you're such a..."

Whatever she was about to say he could already guess. But he needed her to know he was telling her the truth. It was her he was touching in the dark not Tina. As if to prove his words to her he rubbed her harder and faster through her leggings hitting just the right angle on her sweet spot and making her stop immediately.

"Now, now, rabbit, play nice. Put the claws away please when I'm trying to pet you."

He said mockingly as he whispered to her in a commanding yet playful way. She fell against him her cheek to his collarbone cherishing his warmth and giving up. Feeling him make the well known pressure build up inside of her she began groaning practically lifting her pelvis up against his hand to help it along. Feeling him drive her crazy with his touch and her need of it she was truly helpless against him. Giving in she realized also that it didn't do a damn thing to hit his chest the way she did and wouldn't keep him from touching her like he was.

He tried to graze his lips barely against hers once more while attempting to close in on her but she pushed him away turning her head aside making him ache for the interrupted contact. She blushed horribly when he laughed at her fruitless attempts to elude him.

He could tell she still wanted him. There was no denying it. Her jealous comment about Tina gave her away. He had also seen how she had looked at the two of them outside during lunch break at the table. He had achieved exactly what he was trying to do and got just the reaction he was looking for. She could lie all she wanted to but it was in her eyes. The windows to the soul. Now if only she would give in and stop fighting that she wanted him too things would be so much better for the both of them.

The late bell had already rung twice but he didn't care because this was worth any tardy slip received and he wouldn't miss touching her if the world was on fire. They were just lucky no one needed to use this classroom and that no one had come to unlock the door. If they got caught in here, they would both be in very big trouble and most likely wind up in afterschool detention or expelled. On top of that their parents would be called making things even worse. Her father would probably never let her leave the house again, let alone with him or any other boy. His father would probably make the hospital his new permanent residence.

Abandoning rubbing her soft warm mound he withdrew and then placed his hands under her sweater finding her soft breasts once more beneath it instead. He was feeling around over her bra trying to

find his way up underneath it to touch her bare skin and play with her nipples.

She tilted her head back as he pressed into her again grinding against her slowly while feeling her up. When he made it in under her bra to touch her bare breasts he used his thumb and fingers to gently pinch her nipples. When done teasing, he groped her round soft chest fondling her tenderly and went back to kissing the underside of her chin and throat.

Billy simply couldn't get enough of running his fingers over the soft fleshy nubs and slowly half twisting them. Lifting her sweater and slightly bending over her as she arched her back, he exposed her breasts to the cool air of the classroom and kissed a trail down her neck until he was between them with his face. He moved his mouth over one pink hardened nipple and licked it gently.

Wrapping his mouth around it he began to suck on it slowly and then gently bite it with his teeth. She gasped and cried out when he did this earning a moan and a smile from him. Cupping and teasing the other one with his hand he pinched her nipple ever so gently while pleasuring her other one with his lips and tongue. She was grinding against him even more feverishly, obviously enjoying everything he was doing to her.

Eventually she stopped reacting to him as if forcing herself to shut down on him. She grew quiet and was no longer squirming against him. When he noticed he removed his mouth from her and covered her back pulling his hands away and placing them on her thighs gently resting them there.

"Mandy, what's wrong? Are you seriously this upset with me? I thought you were enjoying my hands and mouth on you."

He tried to reach her with a gentle tone of voice, a real one not a cocky or lust filled one, but could not penetrate the new ice coated walls she put up around herself to begin shutting him out in the cold once more.

She was perfectly still now. He noticed she was still breathing fast and kept her body pressed into him but she refused to lower her head

from staring up and wouldn't face him. Keeping her head back with her eyes closed and still as a statue she let him have what he wanted hoping that once he got his fill he would eventually let her go and leave.

"Do what you want. I just won't react to it. It's fine."

Billy felt a slow anger rising up inside of himself seeing that she was resolving not to show just what he was doing to her or how good he was making her feel. She was making it feel less voluntary as a partner activity and more like a single sided softcore rape scenario. As if he was doing these things against her will. Shaming him into feeling like he was forcing himself on her when he knew that wasn't true at all. She knew she craved it and had been enjoying it just as much as he was otherwise she would not have responded to him the way she did.

Mandy didn't understand why it was so hard to say no to him. She desperately wanted to surrender her lips to his once more and keep kissing him but she fought the urge to. Mostly out of pride, she supposed.

When she stopped letting him see how she wanted him, he had suddenly stopped and pulled his hands out from under her sweater and placed them on her thighs. He rested them there as he looked at her despite her not even giving him the decency to look back into his eyes in return.

"Mandy... I tire of these headgames with you. Look at me. Look me in the eyes, please."

He said it to to her more fierce than he meant to but then added a plea to the end of it to soften his tone. Raising one hand slowly to grab her chin delicately, he wanted to have her look right into his soul and face him.

When she did, she marveled at his beautiful face. His long dark lashes were beautiful as always while looking her up and down. Despite his gentle feelings for her, he looked like he was a ticking time bomb just waiting to go off if she didn't listen to him. So she finally looked at him and her cross expression full of denial hiding her emotions made

his own face go from looking irritated to purely hurt and confused.

"Hargrove, get your hands off of me. It's done and you got your date. Go mess with your new girlfriend. I'm sure she will be everything for you that you want her to be that I cannot."

Her spiteful words didn't seem to effect him on the outside as much as the inside while he tried to remain calm and assertive with her in his body language. Mandy was being a petulant child. She knew that Tina wasn't who he really wanted and she knew it well. He had told her several times yet she kept going back to that same thought process.

Apparently, he had done his job a little too well of using Tina to upset her and he was seriously regretting it now. Instead of her coming back to him she went to Tucker and arranged a stupid date with him over it.

"I think you're jealous, rabbit. If you would just admit it to yourself and ask me you know I would drop her in a heartbeat for you any day."

He grinned at her no longer able to be angry with her but rather being proud that he could get her to show that she was in fact extremely jealous. It meant she still cared about him and wanted him in return.

Billy stroked her chin with his thumb watching her intently enjoying that he could make her feel so upset over another female touching him. He wondered if she even truly cared anymore. But this gave him hope.

"Don't call me that. You don't get to call me that. Ever."

She snapped at him in a biting tone but she felt him continuing to grind himself slowly against her with a need she could have felt from across a room which made her breath hitch giving her away that she needed him too.

"I'm hardly jealous, Billy. As you may have heard... I have a date tonight. With Tucker."

She used her eyebrows lifting them and then also lifted her chin defiantly to him. For a moment a hot anger and his own brand of jealousy flashed across his face and in his eyes, making her grin now knowing she was getting to him too with that one.

"Guess I'm not the one who's jealous. You look like a raging bull right now. Can't stand the thought of someone else's hands on me either, right Billy?"

Her words ripped into him like a sadistic chainsaw but they were true despite the pain they caused. Deep down he knew it. He didn't want ANYONE's hands on her but his. He had made that clear to Tommy. He would make that painfully clear to her whether she wanted him to or not. And he would also make it frighteningly clear to Tucker.

"He couldn't handle a firecracker like you, cupcake. When will you learn? You're mine!"

When he said that she was his it sent chills down her spine and made her heart beat a little faster.

"And I'm more than man enough for you and up to the challenge. You will march over there and tell that... little boy... that you belong to a REAL man. Me. And that you are taken."

He said burning his eyes into hers and leaning closer. She could smell his warm sweet breath as his lips moved closer to her own. He couldn't stop looking at her sinful mouth. He wanted to feel it on his body in ways he would have to teach her. Training her pretty little lips what they were fully capable of. His thoughts of it drove him wild while picturing it.

"Oh, and I suppose you would do the same with Tina? Tell her you are taken by me? A little nobody? Admit it, Hargrove. The idea of us together is ridiculous, it's laughable, and you know it. Everyone in school would mock us and there would go your precious reputation as Hawkins Indiana's King."

She would try to say anything to make him second guess what he wanted if it were possible.



"Mandy, I don't give a shit what people think about me, okay? Aside from you, anyways, and don't ask why I don't know. That's kind of why I am where I am right now and even in this position as "King". I don't take shit from no one, I don't let anyone top me, and no one controls me."

He said to her as his jaw was working over time on his gum hardly masking his growing ire with her not complying to what he told her to do with Tucker.

"I seriously doubt that, Billy. I can imagine that's why you didn't make your claim to anyone else besides Tommy and I that day in a nice clear hallway. You would die if people laughed you off the court and out of this school over me. You're just as ashamed to be seen with me as I am to be seen with you."

He looked hurt at that and began to move away slightly from her never tearing his eyes away from hers as her heartless words sunk in.

"Do you really feel that way? Is it because I don't come from a rich stuck up prudish family like yours? I'm the bad boy from the wrong side of the tracks that isn't good enough to be with you? I'm trash, is that it?"

He was furious now but trying to redirect it from her with all that he could and letting it wash over him. She was dividing them into classes and acting like she was higher than he was or like he didn't have the same if not a better chance than any guy here to be with her.

"No... that's not what I meant." She lowered her eyes feeling somewhat bad for saying it and wishing she could take it back. He studied her for a moment.

"Oh, wait. I get it. You're afraid that I'll take your precious cherry and then crow about it all over town, aren'tcha? Afraid I will love you and leave you, huh? That I will treat you like all the others? Like a hot piece of ass and then move on to the next pussycat I have climbing all over me? When will you get it that you're the one I want? Forget those other airheads, forget Tina, they don't even come close to comparing to you and you should know that."

"Then why are you stuck on her, Billy?" Mandy shot at him back wanting to know why he kept Tina around if he claimed he liked her instead so very much. He paused and just looked at her practically unsure of what to say.

"She's a tool, Mandy. As horrible as that sounds, she's a tool I use to maintain my image around school. Also, at your request may I remind you, I use her to make it not so obvious about us spending time off campus as well as sneaking around together when at school. If I didn't do this everyone would think something was up between us and you would get pissed at me, right? You said you didn't want anyone to know and yet you got rides from me almost daily to and from school. It was only because of her that was possible while keeping up to your ridiculous standards. I have done EVERYTHING you have asked of me!"

He had his fair share of points against her. She had asked for discretion and for him to not go around telling or showing anyone. If one of them was being a jerk it was her for wanting to be around him but wanting it to be hidden from everyone else.

How many times because of her stubborn rules and her fear of being seen with him had she sat in the back of his Camaro with Max pretending to be a friend while suffering seeing Tina up front with him and fawning all over him?

She began feeling that was her spot by his side and Tina and other girls occupied it constantly to keep up appearances and each time it tugged on her heart in the worst way. He apparently didn't want that anymore than she did and it seemed he wanted to just go public.

So far the only people who knew she was "his" were Tommy and Carol, whom he both made swear to keep their mouths shut. It was a wonder Tina didn't find out and still hung around him so much.

"I know. But why use her to get to me? Why be all over her and stay by her side if you don't care for her? Why not just tell her to leave you alone? And just... and... just be..." She said softly looking at the floor letting her hurt show now but not being able to finish the sentence.

"Be what? Exclusive with you? You know why I used her? Because you ditched me, Mandy. And you wouldn't even talk to me, come to your door for me, answer my call when I call you. I know you heard your phone ringing that night but you either slept through it or ignored it on purpose. You wouldn't even talk to me in first period but the moment I touch you and kiss you, you go crazy over me. What the fuck is this all about? Why can't you just admit that you have feelings for me? It sure seems like it if you're asking me to drop Tina and not see anyone else but you. Is that what you are asking of me? Say it. Say it out loud nice and clear."

His breath was ragged and his words crass and crude to her as he returned to press against her. He was pressing into her so hard he was making sure she could feel every inch of what she was doing to him despite his hotheaded attitude.

She thought long and hard about everything he had said to her. He didn't like Tina and hated it when she threw her in his face. He didn't want other girls but used them for show. He had tried to contact her the night of their fight but she turned him out cold. He had kept their meetups and what they did private between just the two of them and even risked hurting them both by taking another girl on his arm to fake he was into her and not Mandy. She was being a completely heartless witch to him and she knew it.

Billy watched Mandy as his reasoning began to come over her face and she started to understand a little bit more. There's no way he wanted those tramps like he wanted her. It shocked him but it was the truth.

He wished he could just run away with her after graduation but he didn't want to leave Max and Susan alone with Neil despite how shitty they had been to him. He would stay and be miserable in this town if it meant he could be with her while also keeping an eye on Maxine. She was a shitbird, but if he left, he knew his father would most likely turn his angry attentions onto her. He didn't want that despite him not liking being saddled up with her.

"Do you really think I would take from you something that is precious to you and then turn around telling everyone about it? Do you really fear me doing that to you?"

"I don't have to be afraid or think that you would, I KNOW you would." She said with malice in her voice. And just like that her reason and his progress was gone as they went back to that same old worn out argument. Her virginity. Her purity and her defense of it.

"Tina is a joke. I knew it would get to you if I paid her even the slightest bit of attention. Too easy." He laughed softly watching her defiance of blocking out how he was touching her pretending like it didn't get her hot for him.

Taking the time to show her how he felt the best way he knew how, he leaned down and captured her neck with his mouth leaving burning kisses all over her. He had kissed all over the crude and semi painful broken blood vessels as if to sooth them and retrace them again. He was being more aggressive with his kisses than usual and yet they felt good to her like she was a plant in the desert recieving much needed rain water after having been deprived of it for far too long. She closed her eyes feeling her resolve weaken.

"Billy..." she panted not bothering to fight him anymore. She was burning up inside for him and she had to figure out a way to escape him and fast before things got out of control and he started getting ideas. Otherwise he would have his way with her and most likely seduce her right here in the class room.

"Mandy, you don't understand how bad I want you. You could never imagine. Not unless you allowed me to show you."

She tensed up at hearing his words as he sucked on her earlobe and moaned softly against it. He was a randy beast at worst, and the world's most amazing lover at best. He was so good at manipulating her he most likely wasn't even aware he was doing it. He was simply longing to fuck her, nothing more, ever since finding out she was chaste. He was now dropping the saint act and was resorting to pressuring her which he acted like he would never do.

Billy kept teasing her ear. He was this close to slipping his hand inside her leggings and making her see just how much he needed her, like he did last night. He rumbled a soft growl into her ear loving the feel of her body melting with his. He only wished she would return the notion as he didn't like the idea of loving on a mannequin.

She pulled away and glared at him. He looked confused at why she was so upset when she glowered at him with her beautiful emerald green eyes.

"That's all this is about, right, Hargrove? Getting in my panties and sealing the deal? Well, it's not happening. Move aside and let me go."

He winced at her words as she mixed them all up and put them back into his mouth all wrong. She was wrong that he wanted to just take her virginity and then drop her.

That's hardly what he meant although he couldn't deny he had lots of fantasies late at night in his room all alone while thinking of her that included him being deep inside of her. It was her fault for breathily whispering to him that she wanted that too the other night and putting those images in his head.

He would never make her feel forced though. She wasn't a toy to him to use when needing to slake his lust. She was the object of his desire and affection. She simply didn't get it at all. She must think he was a complete bastard when it came to women. All the girls he fooled around with WANTED it and knew the deal. He made it clear to them it was a one time fuck. But for Mandy, he would give her forever, if that is what she asked him for.

"Rabbit... I already told you. I showed you last night that I wouldn't do that to you. Fuck, why do you have to keep painting me up as this total fucking prick that just wants to bang everything in sight? Maybe that's how I used to be, with other girls, but I can change, you know? Just tell me what you want and it's yours. Tell me you never want me to look at another girl ever again and have eyes only for you. Try me."

He said feeling just how weak he must look to her. He was letting his armor down to see deep inside of his very soul, which he didn't even think he had one. But here he was spouting and professing all of his feelings for her and she was shredding him mercilessly.

He hated how pathetic he sounded and how she reduced him to this state. The power she was wielding and that she had over him. He was like a dog rolling over exposing his belly. But if it meant he could

touch her he didn't even care anymore. She made him come undone nearly every time he looked at her. Their night together was all he could think about. She had looked so good and moved so amazingly against him. It had driven him wild.

Even with her glasses on and her hair braided she still turned him on something fierce and the geek thing shocked him that he actually liked it. She made geek look SEXY. Her body was too amazing to cover up like this and yet it worked. That was what he liked about her. She was not like all the other high school girls who made themselves look like prostitutes. She could be wearing a fucking paperbag and still he would want her all to himself moaning his name for him as he explored her body with his mouth and hands.

"I highly doubt that. Once a cherry hound always a cherry hound. You wouldn't be able to resist trying to put it in. You're just like Tommy, only thinking with your dick."

Mandy was shocked at how much she cursed and used dirty words around him and how mean she was being to him. She guessed he just pissed her off that much that it made her turn into a filthy sailor.

She folded her arms across her chest and his nostrils flared with how obstinant she was being after all the bending and breaking he was doing for her and the anger spilling out of him over her comparing him to that fucking moron. He would NEVER rape a girl or force himself on her if she didn't want him back. Besides, she was thinking about it too most likely as much as he was and he needed her to realize that. The final bell would ring any minute so he had barely any time to show her but he would do his best.

To make his point he grabbed her hair and loosened it, unbraiding it and letting it fall down all over her shoulders and back. He ran his fingers through it messaging her scalp sending tingles all over her body and moved in pressing his needy mouth to hers kissing her hard and senseless. Fast and hungry. Tongues clashing without slowing once he put his into her mouth.

He felt her go limp against him as he parted her lips with his tongue and uniting it with her own. She moaned into the kiss and he pulled her hair yanking her head back so he could kiss down on her.

Tugging lightly and forcing his lips to message her own he felt her become putty in his hands.

She let down her guard and opened her legs allowing him to move even further in between them as his hand sought her wet pooling warmth slipping his fingers into her leggings. He managed to get his hand into her panties and stroked her small bud moving in slow circles. She was shuddering against him. The pressure was building as he rubbed her slow at first then faster over time. She closed her eyes into his kiss and lost all control. She could feel her orgasm building just as it had last night, only now she knew what to expect. She moaned his name and pushed into his hand making him grin as he kissed her wrecklessly, not caring anymore if they got caught.

In the blink of an eye, right before she was about to cum against his fingers and climax, he pulled away and removed his hand from her tender swollen clit that throbbed against his touch. He backed up away from her leaving her a disheveled horny mess on the desk dizzy for him and cut off from her release. He had denied her and let her feel the ache as her orgasm died down unfulfilled.

"Now who's thinking with their sex, princess? You would have came right here if I had allowed you to. Think on that while you are out on your cute little date with your new boyfriend. Because he will NEVER be able to touch you the way I do. Count on that. You will come back for more once you realize it."

He glared at her blowing her a mocking kiss and licked his fingers of her wetness he had caused then backed out of the classroom door leaving her like that as she tried to catch her breath. She began to feel a pang of longing that brought tears prickling to her eyes. He was so damn cruel. But worst of all... he was right.

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Mandy tried to put herself back together before leaving the classroom. The late bell had rung and thanks to Billy, she was VERY late for class. The worst part was what he had done to her which made it unbearably hard to focus on her classwork. She practically was lost unable to concentrate and instead lazily took notes to work on it later.

Everytime she was between classes and he was somewhere nearby he had a shit eating award winning cocky grin on his face and it steamed her up inside. He knew he was getting to her. But she pissed him off in return when she didn't obey him and cancel the date with Tucker. Again, in front of him, she approached Tucker all smiles and talked with him about their date tonight. Billy was fuming trying not to stare and be too obvious but she saw his reaction out of the corner of her eye.

He almost tried to punch and dent in a locker when he witnessed her take Tucker's hand into her own and walked off with him while shaking her hips. She couldn't believe she was being so spiteful. Why was she doing this? She knew it was wrong, and if Tucker found out she was using him, he would hate her forever. That would be it for their friendship.

He still had no idea what she did on her date with Billy out at Lover's Lake. If he knew, he would never look at her the same again. She would become filthy in his eyes as if she were tainted. So she kept her mouth shut and made Nikki keep her mouth shut as well. Alex was, as usual, clueless and just happy everyone seemed to be getting along and that Tucker wasn't moping around anymore all depressed.

When the last class ended, she walked out with Tucker to get a lift from him. The plan was for him to come over to her house and chill with her folks while she got ready. No need to worry about her dad and his "heart to heart" talks which included the mention of his rifle. He knew Tucker as her closest friend so he trusted him already.

Billy was outside leaning against his Camaro, a cigarette burning away in his hand as he watched the pair. Tommy and Carol noticed but they didn't dare say anything. After the ass whooping he had given Tommy they did not want a repeat and would rather opt to stay in his good graces maintaining their heirarchy. It was basically water under the bridge by now but Tommy was bold enough to stare at Mandy and say only one thing.

"This a new arrangement between you two? You guys in one of those... open relationships?"

Carol tried to stifle a chuckle and look serious hitting Tommy



signaling him to shut up. He smirked risking a hit from Billy. But instead of lashing out, Billy just flicked his cigarette and looked away pretending not to care.

"Shut the fuck up, man. I still own that. I got this." He couldn't let on to Tommy that she was avoiding him because he still insisted on his claim to keep him away from her. So he made it out like he was allowing this.

"Where's your little sister? You're gonna be late for Tina if she doesn't hurry. And I know Tina, she doesn't wait up. Even if she has puppy eyes for you." Carol said popping her gum and he whirled on her with anger flashing in his eyes. She stopped cold and shut her mouth.

"She's not my fucking sister. And if she wants to show up late, she can just find her own way home. Neil isn't home today to see if she's late and she will keep her mouth shut. She hates his bullshit as much as I do. Besides... I have a date." He popped his collar and said goodbye to both of them and got in his car. Taking one last look at Mandy and hating how the Tucker boy was getting intimate with her hand, he turned the key in the ignition and revved his engine making a big loud show of him leaving and racing off.

Tucker noticed and looked before Mandy did. He opened his car door and unlocked it so Mandy could get in on the other side. She noticed he didn't even open her door like Billy did for her on their date night. God, she needed to stop thinking about him and comparing every little thing.

"Man, that guy is such a dick. What's his problem?" Tucker said starting his engine and shaking his head. He was just happy to have Mandy to himself for once and excited for their date. Nikki and Alex had wished them both a good time but she saw how Nikki looked at her. As if she was making a big mistake. And maybe she was... maybe.

Mandy frowned knowing exactly what his problem was. She still felt guilty but didn't want to admit it. She didn't believe him back in the classroom and felt he was just manipulating her again. Some of what he said almost pierced her through but how could she believe him? Instead of chasing her today he immediately went to Tina. He struck

the first blow to that trust before she asked Tucker out.

They drove off and chose a different road so they wouldn't run into an angry Billy on the way to Old Cherry Road towards her house.

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Mandy had opted for a beautiful winter coat like dress. It was white and it hung low across her shoulders and tapered at her waist. It turned into a soft wool like skirt at the bottom and she had the matching white furred boots to go with it. She wore equally soft white knee high socks and it looked pretty nice on her. It would keep her warm while also making her look stunning.

*Too bad, Billy. You really could have enjoyed slipping me out of this one.*

She thought sinfully while still struggling to banish him from her mind. She checked herself out in the mirror and made sure her hair was perfect. She was glad she was starting to let Nikki help her pick out nice outfits. She still preferred her baggy comfortable ones and her pajamas, but the more she dressed up the more her confidence skyrocketed and she actually started to appreciate her looks. She had never really admired herself before.

*Jesus, now I'm acting like him. No... I will never be that stuck up.*

She really needed to stop going right back to thoughts about Billy. It was making her ache inside every time she did. Tonight was about her and Tucker, screw what Billy thought.

Deep down though, she knew she missed his hands on her and also knew he would just die and be all over her if he saw her in this number. She looked like a snowflake princess but not as over the top. Her long black hair looked great in contrast to the white wool material and design of the winter dress. She had gloves that matched the boots almost and was sure she wouldn't be cold out tonight at all. But in the theatre, if she got warmer, there was a light thin white tank top under the coat that she could remove the thicker layer from herself.

She had put on a slight thin layer of white eyeshadow and it really

made her green eyes sparkle and look brighter. Applying a little bit of light pink lipstick but not overdoing it she nodded in the mirror happily.

Billy could eat his heart out. Still, she imagined just how he would touch her if he was alone with her right now and it made her regret not responding to him back in that dark classroom or do as he had asked her too. It wasn't okay for Billy to say no one could control or command him and then turn around and try to rule her.

Screw it. She needed a night out to have fun. She only hoped Tucker didn't read too much into this date.

She made her way downstairs and saw Tucker sitting with her parents in the living room. He was dressed up nice and even looked handsome. His dark brown hair was combed back nicely and he wore a clean dress shirt and a pair of jeans. The denim made her think of something else but she swallowed it down. It just wasn't the same. It felt wrong to see him sitting there instead of someone else whose name she refused to think of in her head or say out loud.

Tucker stood up and looked all smiles. He was clearly impressed at how lovely she looked tonight. His eagerness wasn't carnal it was... different. It was a look of longing that was soft and gentle. She smiled at him.

"Wow... Mandy you look amazing." He said admiring her outfit. Her father beamed proudly and her mom wanted to take a picture of them both before they left. They wished them well and told them to have a lot of fun and her dad made sure to reiterate for Tucker to be a safe driver. It wasn't fair how accepting he was of Tucker simply because of seniority in her life but unwilling to accept someone new who... she shook him out of her thoughts again and cursed herself.

"You okay?" Tucker asked reading her face and seeing her look she had a few moments before. He was so sweet. So kind. So different from...

"Yeah. I'm great. Don't worry. So what are we going to go see?" She smiled and took Tucker's arm in hers walking to his car. The chill in the air was intense as Winter was ramping up. Thanksgiving had

come and gone and now Christmas was around the corner. She could hardly believe that a new year was starting soon and that graduation was looming ever closer, as was the Senior Prom dance. It's funny how she swore she would never go but now that Nikki and others had been prying her out of her shell more she actually considered letting Tucker ask her. She was almost sure he would and it seemed to make sense. He was one of her closest friends and they knew each other well. So why not?

"Well its a toss up between a romance flick that's also a comedy... and a horror movie. Everything else kinda looked lame." He said laughing. She nervously laughed with him. They exchanged knowing glances and both said 'horror' at the same time.

Mandy didn't mind horror movies, she had seen her fair share. She just hated jump scares. She looked nervously across the street and saw that his Camaro was there. She had hoped he hadn't seen her come out and get into the car with Tucker, but honestly why did she care? He deserved it for being an ass. She felt like she was being very cruel to him and did have a slight tinge of guilt and regret. But the way he had manhandled her at school earlier and tried to force her to turn down her friend tonight made her angry. He wasn't her husband or her boss so what gave him the right to make demands?

She got in the car and buckled up and they drove off towards the Hawkins Regional Cineplex. It was the only local theatre nearby with reasonable prices and the shortest distance so it was easy enough to choose it.

Standing in line to get their tickets they picked the horror movie they mentioned earlier and Mandy excused herself to go to the bathroom real fast while Tucker went to get the popcorn and drinks. They would be splitting the bill halfway between them going dutch as her mother put it.

After doing her business and washing her hands she looked into the mirror and was shocked to suddenly see Tina from school come out of one of the stalls. She tried to hide her face but it was too late.

"Mandy? Wow... small world. You look good." She said happily being just the sweetest she could to her. Most likely she was here with Billy

so that would explain why she was rocking a very sexy outfit and looking super cheerful.

"Hey, Tina. Yeah, thanks, so do you." She was being civil with her. Tina had never done anything wrong to Mandy.

"Hey... no hard feelings right? I'm just crazy about him. I'm sorry things didn't work out between you two." Her statement caught her off guard. She knew exactly who Tina was talking about. Billy Hargrove. It left a bitter taste in her mouth.

Just who had she been talking to? Billy? Carol? Tommy? Who would put the idea in her head that she and Billy were a couple and on top of that had a falling out? She could only guess ONE person.

She tried hard not to clench her teeth and to stay polite to her. Tina was applying a fresh coat of makeup on her face and Mandy was tempted to see if it was smeared in any way. Jesus, why did she care? She could HAVE him. Of all damn theatres to walk in on where she was... they had to come into this one? She pondered on how Billy had overheard that she was talking about seeing a movie with Tucker. He must have done this on purpose. God, would he really sink this low? She smiled at Tina finishing washing her hands and waved to leave.

She would NOT be jealous. She was over him. She told herself it was for the best.

As she walked out, Tucker was holding onto the snacks looking just miserable trying to juggle it all. She laughed and helped him by taking one of the drinks and some of the candies to help lighten his load.

He smiled at her and showed her the way to the section of the theatre where their movie would be shown. The movie was called "Fright Night" and was about a vampire that moved into a small sleepy town. A teenager named Charlie had to protect his girlfriend, his mom, and tried to help protect the town from the vampire but no one would believe him. The previews looked excellent and Mandy sort of liked vampires and their lore so this would be a real treat.

Taking their seats and getting comfortable the previews were still

playing and Tucker happily munched on popcorn while stealing soulful glances her way. She could only smile softly at him and tried to keep a respectful distance. Date or not he was still a close friend almost like a brother to her. So it felt semi awkward. She tried to ignore it when suddenly the lights dimmed and the beginning of the movie was starting. She watched intently.

Without her knowing it, Tina walked into the same theatre room with a semi buzzed Billy on her, his arm slung over her shoulder. They took their seats in the far back corner and Billy kicked up his feet. When Tina had mentioned to him that she ran into Mandy while sitting in the dark with him his eyes began to scan around on impulse looking for her. He couldn't seem to pick her out from the crowd of movie goers.

"Oh. It's starting!" She said happily bouncing and holding Billy's hand who practically eye rolled her in the dark. He was getting bored real fast. Maybe if she would just allow him to get to first base he could forget all about Mandy. But she was a wall that was more interested in kissing and cuddling than heavy petting. It was sort of a turn off for him as he didn't do lovey dovey tame shit. At least Mandy had been a wild fire willing to engulf him if he simply lead the way and showed her how he wanted to be touched and to touch her. He shook it out of his head but couldn't help trying to look for her.

It wasn't until he noticed Tucker, the kid from earlier at school during lunch, and him putting his arm around a raven haired girl sitting snugly beside him that his stomach knotted up and he knew it was her. Fuck, even the back of her head got him excited and he loved how her dark thick hair fell all around her and the seat. All he thought of was how he had grabbed a fistful of it and had brought it to his nose to smell how lovely it was.

He glared at the kid in HIS spot and Tina was more focused on the movie not noticing he was staring daggers at the Tucker boy. He was trying to be smooth and put his arm all the way around Mandy and get her to lean her head on his shoulder. Most likely he thought he was going to kiss her tonight, or maybe even grope her in his car stopping somewhere before driving her home. Billy rumbled a growl low in his throat and when Tina looked he faked like he had something caught in his throat and gave her a dazzling smile.

He was fuming. The movie and Tina may have well not even existed to him. He was reaching critical mass on his jealousy and he was waiting for the right opportunity to get Mandy alone and show her that she belonged with him, not with this boy who wouldn't know what to do with her naked if he even got half the chance. She was too much woman for this manchild and her flame would only be dimmed by him trying to suffocate it instead of helping it blaze.

Mandy was the flame and Billy was the gasoline. He had to find a way to get out of this room away from Tina if she left her seat and follow her to convince her she should leave here with him tonight.

The movie dragged on and Tina was jumping rather dramatically at parts that aren't even scary. She most likely was trying to get him to put his arms around her and use it as an excuse for him to touch her. It wasn't until the middle of the movie he noticed that Tucker had tried to lean in and kiss Mandy on the cheek. Billy just about jumped out of his seat ready to climb over it and all the others in the way to get to him and pull him off of her.

Fuck, why did she have to do this to him? He had to convince her tonight, and that's all there was to it. Near the end he saw Mandy whisper something to Tucker and get up out of her seat. Maybe she was going for a refill of the popcorn. Now was his chance to make an excuse to ditch Tina.

"Hey. I gotta take a piss." He said being as blunt as he could making sure she wouldn't ask questions.

"Now? The movie's almost over." She protested to him. He looked at her and what he said next he knew she would push him away from her to go.

"You want me to take a leak right here? Sure I can use my soda cup. Coming right up." He acted like he was fishing it out to do his business when she stopped him and snatched the cup. She muttered how gross that was to him and pushed him off her telling him to go and not give her so much intel next time. It worked like a charm.

He grinned at having gotten away and began his hunt to find Mandy. When he came out into the main lobby he saw her refilling her

popcorn and then walk outside for some fresh air. She couldn't be having that much fun if she was going outdoors instead of rushing back to Tucker. Hope fluttered in his heart.

Following her quietly and as natural a gait as he could manage he stepped outside and lit up a smoke. He casually walked over to the pillar she was leaning against.

"Fright Night, huh? Damn, sweets, and here I thought you might have better taste than that when it comes to horror movies." She jumped when she heard his voice and saw that he was dressed in his usual attire. His leather jacket and a white wife beater underneath it with his denim jeans. Most likely the same white wifebeater he had on during their study session so long ago.

"Are you stalking me now, Billy?" She scowled at him and he laughed humorlessly, expecting her snark, when she looked away.

She didn't look completely unhappy to see him though and she was now fidgeting her hands. He admired the white soft downy dress like coat she wore and noticed her bare legs in soft matching white boots. His heart began to race just looking at those long damn legs. He remembered what it felt like to touch them and have them wrapped around his waist. Making a bold move he came to sit down next to her, blowing his smoke away from her face, but still making her scoot far away from him on the bench.

"I'm sure that's one of your fantasies about me, babe. Tell me, do you also wish I would tie you up and spank you too or kidnap you in my trunk? We could go right now if you want, I could make a makeshift gag for you, dirty girl." He was teasing but she huffed at him. He didn't give up.

"Mandy, come home with me tonight. My parents aren't home and I just want to be with you. Alone." Damn it why the fuck was he being so cheesy and lame like that? Where was his prowess? It's like she sucked all the flirty creativity out of him leaving him reduced to a watered down sappy jackass.

"I mean... well... I want to be on you. I love how it feels to be on top of you." He smirked. That was more like it. She gasped and looked to



him.

"Do you have no respect, Hargrove? I'm with Tucker right now." She said just staring her big green lovely eyes into his icy blue ones that were lighter with the Winter weather.

He grinned and stuck his tongue out sideways then running it over his lower lip putting out his cigarette in record time.

"Is that what the kids are calling it these days?" He took in all of her lovely features.

Her round soft face. Her lips swollen from the cold but still soft and glossy. Her eyeshadow really made her eyes pop. His heart was in his stomach and he wanted to rip it out and shove it into her hands beating, raw, and bloody. What would it take?

"No, Billy. Go back to Tina I'm sure she is missing you." His chest was on fire with anger that she kept bringing that skank into their conversation. Couldn't she see that he only involved her to make her pine for him?

"Doubtful. She's an airhead. I don't want a bimbo. I want you." The way he said it made her heart flip. She felt it skip a beat. She was about to cry but didn't want him to see it. Why did he have to make this so damn hard for her?

"Keep wanting. You should have thought of that before you toyed with me for months before getting close to me on our 'date'." Her vindictiveness was fully out in the open.

"Is that what this is about? You felt I was toying with you so you have me bring you out there, fool around with me, and then spurn me just to get even? Fuck, Mandy, I'm not even that cold. You're a full on ice queen. You've even got a complete matching outfit." He tried to use humor to defuse the tension but she didn't bite. He sighed.

He fiddled with his zippo wishing he could just keep calm with her and not be vicious but she was driving him crazy. He wanted to touch her. He wanted to fill her completely. He wanted to break that

annoying fucking piece of skin that was stopping him from having her and making her deny him so much. He also wanted to beat the shit out of the Tucker kid for giving her a reason to doubt. He wanted to do a lot of things to her and with her. But be cruel to her he never wanted to do. It just sort of happened.

"If you're so keen on needing me, Billy, say it. Say what I need to hear." She still looked ahead of herself not showing any emotion. If he didn't get it now he never would.

"Say what?" He leaned in to her not knowing what she wanted him to say. His close proximity to her as well as the heat radiating off of him was sending chills down her spine despite her warm outfit and the cold atmosphere.

"Say what I need to hear from you. Or no deal." He sighed and hung his head between his long legs for a bit, practically in defeat.

He began rambling off random things he thought she might like to hear. Not really knowing if any of them were the right thing she was seeking.

"Ummm... I'm an asshole. I once went to a Metallica concert back in California. My favorite color is blue. Jesus, Mandy, what the hell? What do you want me to say?"

She looked at him and although his eyes were beautiful and wild, feral and hungry for her, the total opposite of Tucker's eyes when he looked into her own, Billy could not say how he truly felt about her. It hit her hard and she was about to get up when he sighed asking her not to go.

"Mandy... I..." She looked at him wondering if he felt it too. The electricity between them. The spark. The rush. The deep pang inside. If he did... he would be able to clearly identify it for what it was and then she would be more than happy to leave with him, the consequences be damned.

"I'm not very good at this, rabbit. I don't like... feelings." He confessed looking angry as if backed into a corner.

"I know." Just two soft little words from her but she looked at him like she still wanted him to take her right there. His emotional blockage... it was the chasm between them. Before he could say anything she got up and said goodbye to him and walked inside leaving him out there struggling.

He growled and followed her in not giving up. When she walked near the concession stand before going back to the movie, he grabbed her gloved hand and pulled her towards the unisex bathroom. She tried to resist at first but then she stopped trying to struggle and looked into his eyes with a lustful gaze rivaling his own.

When he pulled her inside he locked the door over her shoulder and pinned her to it. He looked into her eyes hungrily and she shuddered. She wanted him too. Why did she have to resist him so much? What was she afraid of? Would it matter that much if he didn't care for her as much as she did him? Just their one night together had told her everything she would need to know about how she felt in her heart. He was slow... a late bloomer catching up. She had already been to the finish line. When would he see it?

He growled softly and moved in to kiss her. She didn't fight him. Her mouth eagerly and hungrily accepted his as if it had belonged there and always had been. He had lifted her up against the door and wrapped her legs around his waist resting them on his powerful hips. His rock hard length pressing into her core which she could feel under the lifted skirt of her winter coat dress.

She moaned into his deepened kiss and he pushed his hardened body against her bouncing her up against the door getting comfortable as he teased her lips and teeth with his wet warm tongue. He growled against her mouth talking in between kissing her never wanting their lips to part even when he had to in order to get the words out.

"Mandy... I want you. Let's go home. I'll do anything you want. Just let me have you tonight." He said in between breathless gasps of kissing her so hard he was getting dizzy. He was searching the depths of her mouth taking in the taste of her sweet lips coated with cherry chapstick and sticking his warm wet tongue into her mouth passionately.

He was making it seek out hers and connect so deliciously that she sighed into his mouth and whispered his name over and over. If she didn't let him take her home with him, he might be tempted to take her right here in this bathroom, but he would prefer her in his bed. A place she had never yet been since he first got her in his room.

"I won't steal your innocence, Mandy. Not unless you wanted me to. Never until you want me to. I just want to feel you and taste you all over. I just want to melt into you and get lost in you."

He moaned and grunted softly when she tangled her hands in his hair feeling the familiar sensation of her fingertips playing with his curls. She grazed his scalp with her talented fingers and it made him shiver while pinning her to the door. He was getting more and more excited by the minute, loving his little trysts with her behind closed doors and yet in public places.

She felt his growing bulge pressing into her and it made her ache inside. She accepted his deep kiss moving her tongue along his lips teasing him, tasting him, and then entwining it with his. She moaned softly against him and she couldn't deny that she loved the feel of him pressed against her and how he kissed her like there was no tomorrow.

"Oh... fuck... fffffuck, Mandy... I'm gonna lose control if you don't touch me where I need it the most. Please, touch me." He said while moaning even louder letting out soft little whines when she allowed his mouth access to her throat.

He fumbled with her buttons opening the coat to reveal her tigher layer underneath that was much more forgiving for his hands and mouth to wander all over her. He pressed his lips to her cleavage and sunk down to his knees practically taking her down to the floor with him, her body still against the door and resting her bottom on his thighs, his body still in between her legs. He lifted the thin wool top up and revealed her white lacey bra that held her beautiful breasts and her soft pink nipples hardening under his touch.

They puckered slight when he lowered his head and took them one at a time into his mouth swirling his tongue around them. She could feel just how bad he needed her and it made her stomach burn with

that all too familiar fire. Did he burn inside as badly as she did? She could only guess he did. She looked down at his beautiful face while his brows were knitted together enjoying suckling on her small pink nipples.

His tongue flickered over one of them and she tilted her head back giving into him, allowing him to take what he wanted of her once more, no matter what it was. This is why she feared him. He could always make her give in to his touch and she would lose all of her resolve whenever he drove her crazy with his mouth and hands.

He grabbed her hands that had been tangled in his hair while he nibbled on her, suckling hard and messaging her with his talented tongue, and placed them down to his belt.

"Remove it. I still want you to unzip me so you can feel what you do to me. Touch me there please... I can't stand it any longer. DAMNIT, Mandy Don't tease me!" Her hand rested there making him wait.

When she obeyed he closed his eyes and put his hands back on her breast to tease her nipple with his thumb and finger. He sucked in air between his teeth when he felt her hand begin to move against the belt obliging him and his command. She gave a soft grin when he opened his eyes looking at her and it nearly killed him to see that wicked smile.

She groaned and looked into his eager blue eyes burning bright for her. As she slowly undid his belt buckle and slid it off of him he growled with such an inhuman sound it made her eyes go wide. He was truly worked up over her, and she could feel it. The heat between them rising. He placed her hand on his button and nodded to her. She popped the button open illiciting a soft moan from his lips. He dove into her shoulder and hungrily went back to kissing her neck and nibbling on her ear before he whispered breathily into it.

"Zipper. Now. Mandy... don't make me wait much longer. Either that or get in my car and let's get out of here. Stop stalling, baby." His tongue tickled the edge of her earlobe as he whispered his need against it. He pulled it into his mouth biting down on it gently while grazing it with his teeth.

In one unmistakable movement, she grabbed his zipper and went further than she did that night. She pulled slowly rugging it down and felt his boxers with something soft and yet hard poking out between the zipper track. Placing her hand inside of them she felt the full length of him and how thick and long he was. He almost yelped at how her bare soft hand felt stroking him and he shuddered unable to control himself anymore.

Pulling down down off the door and laying her on the bathroom floor he pressed himself in between her legs and began thrusting himself wildly into her hand. She could feel his tip, the ridge of it, and stroked all the way down to the base where it joined his pelvic region. He bucked into her hand and hissed through his teeth, frantically moving his hips back and forth. He rested his head between her breasts and couldn't stop himself from pumping in and out of her grip.

"Fuck, Mandy... feels so good... I'm gonna... oh God!" She smiled and used both hands to guide his length in and out of her enclosed hands.

"Yes... yes, I am." She said teasingly, earning a small giggle from him in between him growling and groaning at her for her using his line.

"Mandy, I don't think I can hold it much... longer... fuck!" He was picking up the pace and diving into her thrusting and bucking so fast she could barely keep a hold of him.

"Mandy... please... you might want to move... it's coming..." He was warning her that he was about to explode in her hands and against her but she shook her head no. She may have never done this... but she had read all about it and knew exactly what to do.

She earned a shocked look on his cute face, wide eyes, his lips pursed and scrunched up with intense pleasure from the feel of his throbbing member in her small soft warm hands. She guided him up to her chest and pressed him against her cleavage. His tongue slipped out from between his lips and he licked at them as he felt his orgasm about ready to blow.

"Billy... don't hold back. Cum. Just relax and let it happen."

She smiled softly at him mirroring his words to her that night he had made her climax, and just that one act alone made him lose it. As she guided his shaft pointing his soft tip towards her breasts, he came undone right fucking there for her as he pushed into her hands faster.

As soon as his hard cock and the head of it made contact with her soft cleft and nestled in between it, he gave a loud shout and cried out as he spilled himself into her. It came out with such a force he felt he would pass out. He had been really careful not to aim it in her face or mess up her lovely hair.

He watched as if in slow motion, his warm seed spurt gently on her bare skin, and pool in between her breasts. Moaning softly with his entire body shuddering, he admired the look of it resting there in the soft nook of her cleavage. He smiled down at her admiring the pattern he made on her, marking his territory. He felt absolutely primal and possessive of her in that moment.

She looked into his eyes as he slowly stopped bucking and had to resist collapsing onto her to catch his breath so as not to make a sticky mess between them. Instead he lowered himself and rested his head on her flat and clean stomach hoping he wasn't hurting her with his weight into the cold hard bathroom floor. She thread her fingers in his hair and he closed his eyes feeling her breathing beneath his cheek pressed lovingly into her soft warm skin.

"Baby... you're amazing. Thank you..." he whispered softly and just laid there for a few minutes. He got up and not even bothering to worry about himself or his clothes, he helped her up and got paper towels and water to clean her off as best as he could.

Her top didn't get it too bad. Once she was clean he worked on himself and went to put himself away in his boxers. She walked up and stopped him looking into his eyes. His mouth hung open and he felt the urge to have a cigarette soon but he allowed her to take her time.

She carefully put his waning erection away into his boxers and helped him zip up carefully and button his jeans. She handed him his belt and made quick work of putting it back on him. He smiled and leaned in kissing her as she buckled him up.

"Mandy... will you come home with me now?" He pleaded his eyes lighting up for her. She gave a playful smile making him wonder for now if she would or not. She was curious just how many times he could keep this up. He seemingly had the stamina of an angry horny bull.

His cigarette was dangling now from his lips and she told him to go outside so he could go smoke while she told Tucker she had to leave. He did as she suggested and walked out towards the front of the theatre, most likely not even bothering to explain to Tina why he would be ditching her. She kinda felt bad for her but he was truly not interested in her just as he said.

Mandy had to wait before coming out about at least five minutes later in case Tucker or Tina caught them coming out of the bathroom together. She could imagine just how much noise they had made and was surprised that the staff of the theatre hadn't knocked and interrupted yelling at them to get out and leave.

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## **21. She's Mine - Billy's Possessive Nature**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

**NOTE:** None of this is organized yet and will be changed around once completed with fully organized chapters. Please be patient... I don't write from start to finish and the muse is in control in my head for this story as I write bits and pieces.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

**SHES MINE - BILLY'S POSSESSIVE NATURE**

**Summary:**

Mandy and Billy just had a hot steamy time in the bathroom of the movie theatre. Now she has to find a way to let Tucker down gently so she can go away with Billy. Tina may still be clueless as to where her date went. Hilarity ensues when Billy becomes uber possessive of her over Tucker's presence and grabby hands. If she goes home with him... what will happen?

Enjoy :D

Billy had waited outside for over ten minutes. He was pacing and could practically go through an entire pack of smokes waiting for her.

He growled taking a long drag and debated if he should go back inside and see what was taking so damn long.

If Tucker was trying to keep her there with him he might be tempted to clock one of her closest friends and grab her forcefully to go not even caring if Mandy got pissed at him.

He snorted doubting that Tucker even knew what friendship was with the way he stared at Mandy and fumbled his words over her like a horny idiot. He knew what Mandy did to him personally, so he could only imagine what kind of things this Tucker loser was thinking in his head about her himself whenever he laid his love sick puppy eyes on her. It was clear he wanted more than friendship from her. The thought of it made his blood pressure rise.

He suddenly laughed trying to picture that when he thought how little of a chance the kid stood. If he knew what they had just done in that bathroom together while he was eating his popcorn and waiting for her... he'd choke on it.

He grinned wickedly half wanting to tell him in graphic detail just to see the look on his stupid face. The little shit would probably have a heart attack. It was almost tempting to go through with it but Mandy would have a shit fit and he didn't want to mess up his chances of bringing her into his bed to give her more of himself.

Licking his lips he sighed wishing she would hurry because he wanted her so very badly writhing under him alone in his room tonight. She still had yet to lay that beautiful body all over his bed wrapped up in his smell while he would do positively sinful things to her. He groaned losing his patience.

Almost as if on instinct, he turned to look inside the lobby through the glass double doors, and that's when he saw her explaining to him that she had to go. He didn't look too happy. Awww, poor little baby looked like he was going to cry. It was a beautiful sight to behold. Mandy really brought the mean out of him when it came to other people trying to handle her against his explicit permission. Not that he would ever give it, but still.

He waited to see just how this would play out if he let her handle it

without him. Even after their little encounter he still felt he wanted more of her as if she were Chinese food: eat it and you're hungry two hours later.

And if this shithead got in his way of his plans he would raise hell right in front of everyone, despite how Mandy may not like it too much.

He ground his cigarette out with his boot and continued to watch looking for any signs of trouble that would make him need to come in there and handle it his way.

Mandy stood across from Tucker trying to get him to understand and let her go. He wouldn't listen.

"What do you mean you have to go? You disappeared during the ending of the movie. Where did you go when you left? I waited for you for a while, Mandy" He looked absolutely crushed as if she had just slapped him across the face or shot his dog. If he knew what she had been doing with Billy, she may as well have.

"I'm sorry, Tucker. I wish I could stay longer and explain but I have to leave. I can catch up with you later at school though, okay?"

She turned to go, waving at him first before trying to leave not daring to hug him with Billy watching, his powerful eyes on her positively fixated and her fully knowing how jealous he could get. It was kinda hot but Tucker didn't deserve that.

When she spun to leave, he caught her wrist attempting to get her to stay. His grip was gentle but firm just like his personality but she was still getting pissed that he wouldn't let her go. She closed her eyes lowering her head giving a deep sigh feeling it in her gut that shit was about to go down.

She tried to talk him down to release her but it was too late. She looked outside and saw Billy heading this way. He looked absolutely floored and about to open the gates of hell unleashing it inside of the entire theatre. His eyes were burning with deadly anger that Tucker was even deigning to touch her.

*Oh, fuck.* Mandy thought to herself squeezing her eyes shut and groaning.

*Damnit, Tucker.*

"Don't go, please." He said softly. He had no idea just what a bad situation he was about to be in. Because she could wager all 170 lbs of Billy's muscle and body mass at best guess was charging his way and it wouldn't be pretty.

"Tucker... trust me. Let go and back away. Please. Do it now..." She didn't want him to get hurt. Even if he was being super annoying. Billy sometimes didn't know his own strength, or maybe he did, and she feared for her friend getting seriously injured.

"Why? Don't go, Mandy, I want you to stay. At least go for a drive with me for a little while." He said this while searching her eyes with his own wanting a clear explanation or for her to give in. They had been having such a nice time. He couldn't understand what would possibly make her want to leave so soon cutting their "date" short.

She heard the double doors bang open as her head snapped turning in the direction, and before seeing him coming, she had heard Billy's heavy boots on the lobby carpet fast approaching. It was too late. She braced herself but turned to him to try and talk him down from doing anything rash to Tucker.

He wasn't having it and walked right past her with his face set as hard as a stone gargoyle, terrifyingly beautiful to behold. With one quick movement he had walked right up to Tucker breaking their contact abruptly by forcing Tucker's hand off of her wrist. He did this by grabbing her friend's wrist and squeezing it so hard, Tucker gave a yelp of pain instantly letting go. He grabbed his injured hand with his other good one and was in shock.

After Billy freed her from Tucker clutching onto her, he forcefully moved against Tucker's chest and shoved him back with his own making him stumble and fell backwards, barely even really pushing. But he was no match for his strength so Tucker lost footing and went down. Billy's eyes were two hot burning coals blazing in anger. The bull had come out seeing red.

The lobby attendants working the snackbar were staring debating if there would be trouble and if they should call the upper management onto the scene or call for security.

"It's okay, really. Everything is fine." She said trying to tell them she would handle it. She pinched her nose in frustration and could practically feel the heat of Billy's anger steaming off of his body at Tucker.

"No, it's NOT okay, Mandy." He said gruffly to her.

Then he turned on Tucker who was staring up at at him going from fear and shock to anger and embarrassment. Billy never missed a beat with his continued threat. His hands balled up into fists at his side, leaning slightly towered over him with his pendant dangling, his eyes glaring down at him.

"You better keep your fuckin' hands off of her or the next time you try it, you will be drawing back a bloody stump, got it?"

Tucker simply swallowed and nodded.

"Good. So, if you enjoy touching your tiny pathetic excuse of a dick at night, you will heed my warning and quit grabbing her if you know what's good for you. I will break both of them off including all of your fingers one by one."

Billy felt his father's demon coursing through his veins. God, he sounded and acted just like his old man. He almost felt shame. Almost.

Nonetheless, he gritted through his teeth viciously unable to contain his ire at Tucker having put his hands on her. His display of brute strength so violent and yet perfectly restrained gave proof that he somehow knew Tucker wouldn't be able to take a hard hit from him like Tommy had that day.

Mandy groaned and moved like she was going to help her friend up while apologizing to the staff. Tucker scooted backwards on the floor with wide eyes before attempting to stand up on his own, terrified of touching Mandy even if she was instigating it this time to stand him

upright.

Billy wouldn't even give her time to help or calm the situation down. He picked Mandy up effortlessly and slung her over his shoulder.

"Billy! Put me down, I can walk, thank you!" She said mouthing an apology to the passersby that were witnessing this while tapping on Billy's shoulders with her hands. She was humiliated and turning red.

"I'm sorry, Tucker! I will call you later okay?" She tried to make amends as Billy hauled her out of the double doors and set her down by his Camaro.

He was LAUGHING. He thought it was hilarious what he did in there.

"You should have seen that fucker's face. Oh my god. Priceless." He fumbled for his keys unlocking the car so he could go to her side and open it for her.

Mandy folded her arms clearly upset.

"That 'fucker' is one of my best friends, Billy. And I am pretty sure you made him mess his pants."

He roared with laughter opening the door for her, obviously not giving a crap, but then when he saw her angry face he gave a slight apologetic look to her.

"No offense, rabbit, but that makes it even funnier. Maybe now he will think twice before putting his hands all over you. You're mine, Mandy Hawkins."

She narrowed her eyes at him and once more he flicked his tongue out at her playfully not even taking this seriously. She gave a soft huff and rolled her eyes at him.

"After you, my lady. Your chariot awaits." He said giving a sarcastic bow waiting for her to climb in.

"It's NOT funny..." she said after a few minutes of riding with him silently as he drove them back to their familiar street of origin.

"C'mon. You gotta admit it's a little funny." He said smirking as he pounded the steering wheel happily, one of his favorite bands playing, obviously pleased with his little show back at the theatre.

"You're an ass, Hargrove." She said shaking her head still sore at him for his behavior. Poor Tucker. She would have to try and smooth things over with him tomorrow unless he bolted for his life from her now upon contact.

"But I'm YOUR ass. And we all know you love my ass, princess." He shot back giving a chuckle earning a huge blush from her and pulling into his father's driveway. The old Ford truck was gone so no doubt he was right, Susan and Neil were out and most likely wouldn't be home for hours.

Max had him drop her off at the Plaza Arcade earlier before heading to the movie theatre. They would have the entire house to themselves.

He grinned and got out opening her door for her admiring how her long legs looked as she climbed out of his ride. When they shut the car doors locking it up, he caught her by surprise and picked her up like a groom would his bride. Carrying her while nuzzling into her neck enjoying her smell and her protests, he took her to the threshold of the house.

Her familiar happy charming Billy was back. She couldn't help but smile. Putting her down he unlocked the door and pushed it open motioning for her to go inside. She walked in and he closed the door behind them locking it.

Mandy had only been over to Billy's house on few short occasions.

Once was their study date for English at Mr Watkin's request to help him get his English Lit grades up and ace his test on Shakespear.

The other time was when Billy had boldly made a housecall on her, leaning into her front door frame sending her heart a flutter to boldly issue an invite to her for dinner with them, with Neil's permission of course. She had almost said no but she couldn't resist him and he had talked her into it. That had been the first night she felt the thick

tension in that house between his family members.

And the last time she was here it was because Susan was hard pressed for a babysitter and asked Mandy to sit for Max. They had originally thought Billy would be out doing his own thing at the time they set it up. But once he heard she was coming over listening in on Susan talking on the phone with her and arranging it, he abandoned all his plans and canceled his date who was sorely pissed at him for it just to be available for her. He wound up staying home just to hang with Mandy while she watched Max for a few hours.

Neil had been at work and Billy took off after him not coming back to the house until Susan had left. Neil had a strict rule about Billy not being alone with females in HIS house. Susan wouldn't enforce it but still he waited until both were gone just to be safe.

He asked Mandy to keep it between them that he returned and had practically threatened Max to keep her mouth shut unless she wanted him to break some of her precious skateboards, much to Mandy's distaste at his bullying tactics.

With his parents gone and it just the three of them, it was nice. They all made something to eat together and then popped popcorn to put on some VHS tapes watching movies. Billy and Mandy had argued over what horror movies were good and which ones were horrible. He made good points but Mandy one upped him every time with Max chiming in earning a glare from her step brother.

Billy tried to put his arm around her on the couch earning a disgusted look from Max and Mandy pushed his arm away pissing him off. He seemed to like that Mandy enjoyed horror movies and wasn't a squeamish stereotypical girl who got grossed out at a little bit of gore. He did make fun of her about hating the jump scares though and never let her live it down.

Despite the angst between him and his stepsister which was always visible, they had a comfortable peace between them that night. Max had been excited to show Mandy her collection of skateboards and some skating tricks outside calling herself "The Zoomer" which made Billy laugh at her. She guessed he felt his car was way more impressive than Max's puny skateboard.



Billy tried to steal all Mandy's attention every chance he got by flirting with her or getting a rise out of her which had grossed Max out many times. But it was clear Max adored Mandy and she felt the same way towards her.

Mostly when Neil wasn't in the picture it was always nice at that house. The man frightened her and she didn't like his bad temper and offputting mannerisms and she could see just how much he dug into Billy and tried to belittle him and his self confidence or bark orders at him. Neil had a hardon for embarrassing him in front of her and making him feel like a worthless piece of garbage. She was slowly getting the idea and bigger picture on why Billy acted out when away from home. Why he was such an Alpha male needing to be on top and in control.

Billy's stepmom Susan, whom he absolutely loathed, was soft like Mandy but a little too weak willed where she was headstrong and not afraid to speak up. Susan never stood up to Neil or his poor treatment of Billy but sometimes Mandy attempted to earning a glare from Neil and nothing more.

She KNEW he couldn't do anything about her because she was not under his control and afraid she might out him to the whole town about how his homelife personality was. She was a timid woman who was under his control.

Often times Mandy felt Billy was mirroring his father. He sometimes tried to fashion her into being the Susan to his Neil and she wouldn't allow it, which is maybe why he wanted her so badly and was always surprised with her. She was independant and thought for herself when around him, he seemed to bring that more and more out of her, and often did the opposite of what he wanted which made him enjoy messing with her or getting even in fun playful ways as payback.

Susan seemed to really like Mandy almost as much as Max had warmed up to her in the time they had together and gotten to know one another. They both noticed Billy was more gentle and kind, less hotheaded and cruel, when she was around or simply because of having her in his life to counterbalance that temper of his. Susan and Max both saw she was actually good for him but Neil didn't give a crap either way and deep down was obvious about not liking her. She

was a tool Billy could use to escape his wrath.

Although she had never seen Neil hit Billy first hand she got the impression that he was abusive towards him. She just didn't know the full extent of it and Billy would never talk about it. Ever. That subject was always off limits as well as the subject of his real birth mother. He would clam up and get angry and often yell at her if she tried to get him to open up about it.

But for each occasion she was here in this house, she had only been in his room one time. Just once. And that was when she was teaching him and preparing him for the English Lit test.

He had tried so hard to get pretty far with her that night, pulling out all the stops he guessed would work on her as it did other girls, only to be turned down and sorely disappointed that he would actually HAVE to study with her. That had been the first time he had shown there was more to him besides his horny side and she felt that that was the exact moment when she started to... she shook that thought from her head not wanting to complete it.

She still didn't know how to tell him of her intense feelings for him. He wasn't good with feelings, as he said earlier, and she swallowed the lump in her throat wondering how she would ever truly know if he cared deeply for her as she did him. He wasn't the type to say it, and if he did, he wouldn't mean it but say what he had to in order to make a girl feel special and want to take her clothes off for him.

He had his large hand in hers and was leading her past the living room and kitchen but asked if she was thirsty first. She politely declined and he continued to tug her along to his bedroom. Leading her down the hall and opening his bedroom door, she realized she was actually nervous. The blankets in a park by a lake on the ground would be nothing like being intimate with him in his own room. On a bed. Even the Camaro would be nothing like it. A bed was much more special with a lot more options for him to swoon her into doing almost anything he wanted. Almost.

"Billy... I don't know if I'm ready for this. I mean..." He turned and looked at her after shutting his door. She was standing in the middle of his room with one arm over her chest and her other one. She

looked absolutely gorgeous in that Winter coat but he longed to see her without it. Maybe even bare before his hungry eyes that ached to see every curve of her body.

"Are you nervous? Don't be..." He smiled gently and walked towards her and cupped her face pulling her mouth to his like a magnet.

He pressed his lips to her after licking his own once or twice to wet them for his onslaught of kisses and she felt his warm tongue invade her open mouth driving all nagging thoughts from her mind. She almost fell into him right there while standing and he held her tight to his body leading her over to his bed.

The butterflies were viciously attacking her stomach as he gently peeled himself out of his jacket never breaking his kiss with hers like magic and never missing a beat. He placed his hands on hers moving them to his shirt wanting her to help him lift it over his head. He just LOVED making her undress him.

When the shirt came free past his head and shoulders baring himself to her, she put her hands on his warm powerful chest and pressed them into him enjoying the feel of his smooth hot skin against her palms. He groaned hungrily into her as he deepened his kiss making her feel dizzy. She suddenly pulled away when she could feel herself giving into him too easy. She wanted him so bad it almost physically hurt her to feel it.

His face was showing outwardly exactly what she was feeling on the inside for once. He wanted her too. Their little episode in the bathroom had nearly driven him wild enough to attempt pushing himself inside of her. But he kept himself in her hands until he finished and his bucking and groaning had made her wish he was pushing himself inside of her instead of her hands. That was when she knew she was getting close to being in trouble with him. She was wanting more and more to give herself to him completely.

He looked into her beautiful green eyes searching and just sitting there next to her, leaning in and putting his warm strong arms around her. She was trembling and he could feel her shake as he surrounded herself with his heat. She couldn't be cold.

"Is everything okay, rabbit?" He looked concerned as if she were planning on rejecting him again and thinking about walking out. She wasn't. But this was his bed. And... well... she couldn't help but wonder just how many other girls had been on it before her. It was starting to bother her a bit and she felt a familiar pang of slight jealousy burn within her as she tried to find the words.

"Yes." she said softly. He looked at her and she could tell he didn't fully believe her.

"Mandy... you can tell me what's on your mind. Please don't hide things from me." He somewhat frowned but he was being sincere not angry or disappointed.

"Am I... the only one... to ever..." she started to ask. He sat for a moment until he understood what she was asking him, the knowing coming into his eyes.

"The truth?" He said pressing his hand to her face and stroking it softly. She leaned her face into his touch and laid her head on his shoulder.

"The truth, Hargrove." She could take it. At least she told herself she could. She prepared for the worst.

He shook his head no but while he did it he was smiling and instead of saying the word "no" he said the word she longed to hear.

"Yes."

Her eyes lit up and her chest almost caved in right there from the soaring realization that she was the only girl he had ever taken to his bed.

"Only you, Mandy. I don't let anyone sleep in my bed with me. I swear it. And I meant it when I said all girls before you were a one time thing. I never wanted them in my bed. If I told you the alternative you'd probably never want to be in that location again so we won't discuss that."

The Camaro. She knew about that though. The blankets and pillows from that night smelled like him and no one else but that didn't mean

he couldn't have driven someone around in it somewhere and parked using it to get his jollies with a random girl. An image of Tina suddenly came to mind.

"Tina... did you?..." He sighed. She didn't want to keep asking these questions when she had finally gotten them back to their old comfortable selves again. But she had to know.

"No. I never touched her, aside from kissing her neck at school in front of you and putting my arm around her. Nothing happened. You have my word." He looked deeply into her green eyes and she saw no traces of deceit in his frosty blue ones. She believed him. Completely.

She bit her bottom lip making him groan while seeing her do it. She liked how that turned him on feircely and the haze of lust that would cloud his eyes each time she did. It was the same as her loving him slowly unbuckling his belt and removing it and the sounds it made as he did so.

Mandy suddenly had the urge to mark her territory on that Camaro. To have him fool around with her in it replacing all the other feminine memories that it held. She laughed at how ridiculous she was being. He would never shame her by doing things with her in the back of the Camaro like she was a cheap date. He wanted her here... now... on his bed and in his room. Her stomach felt warm and she felt very special all of a sudden.

He smiled and leaned back into her continuing their kiss and gently removing her Winter coat dress so that all she had on was her white soft tank top shirt and her white silky thong like panties. He peeled her white knee high socks off of her legs and feet then removing her boots while running his hands along them to feel how soft they were. He sucked in a breath and let his gaze wander along the pale soft length of them. When his eyes hit her upper thighs and beyond he felt a groan escape his throat signaling his need to touch her there.

"Billy..." she said again as he gently laid her down on his bed on her back while kissing her hard and fast. He was about to climb over her resting in between her legs with his full weight. He wanted to feel her under him and let his hands move all over every inch of her body. He stopped and simply stayed put looming over her, just like how he did

when on the blanket at Lover's Lake. Pausing and waiting for her permission. It was kind of cute how he did that.

"What is it? Talk to me. But do it quick because I need to be with you. I don't want to wait much longer, babygirl." His blue eyes were searching deep into hers and he ran his large strong hand over her tight stomach feeling her smooth abdomen and moving it higher tracing his fingers up towards her breasts under her top.

She closed her eyes and moaned making him grin at her reaction to his touch. When he began to move his hand down below her panty line and put it inside the soft thin material she grabbed his hand holding it there.

He looked confused. She was clamming up on him. Did she not trust him anymore?

"Billy... I'm not ready for what I know you want. Despite both of us wanting it." His lips lingered merely inches from hers as he let that sink in.

He wasn't even sure if he wanted to take that from her. Eventually he supposed it would happen, but not just yet. It was something special and unique that he liked about her and he wanted to enjoy it for as long as he possibly could. Maybe she feared that once he took that from her he would ghost her and move on. Not a chance in hell. He would make sure she knew that before he did slip himself inside of her and be the first one to make love to her that way.

"I know, rabbit. You have my word that I won't do that until you want it. But... that doesn't mean I can't have a little fun and try and MAKE you want it. Right?" He grinned a devious smile and went back to kissing her, grinding his mouth down onto hers barely letting her breath. Mandy melted into him and moaned softly as her lips recieved him urgently.

He grabbed on her panties and was about to tug them down when he suddenly decided instead he had a better idea. Kissing a trail down her chin, neck, chest, and stomach, he moved his lips to her pelvis and was tonguing at the thong with his lips. He was using his mouth to gently pull them down lower on her thighs to reveal her lovely

tight looking pussy, letting his eyes drink in every detail.

He took in the sight of her committing everything to his memory. The smooth skin where she shaved, the landing strip of soft light down hair left behind leading up towards her belly button, the soft mound hiding her pink pretty labia and sweet wet folds. Her small little rosebud of a clit that was hiding beneath begging for his tongue to bring it out.

He moaned and using his mouth to wrestle her panties away he finally grew impatient and pulled them down and over her ankles tossing them to the floor. She had been watching him work them with his tongue and teeth and it was so sexy that she couldn't help but feel that same fire in her belly that she always got with him.

"Do you trust me?" He said looking up at her from below her stomach. She wasn't sure why he would ask but she nodded slowly waiting for him to explain. Mandy most likely should have asked him to explain before agreeing, knowing how Billy could be.

He gave a smirk and giving her mound a soft kiss and a quick lick making her gasp before raising up, he scooted close to her between her bare legs and in between them. He looked down at her touching her soft stomach and tracing his fingers along it. She looked up at him waiting to see what he would do.

"Billy... please don't make me wait either. I'm craving you so much right now." Her breath was laced with lust and need and he nodded. His hands went to his belt and although it turned her on to see him slowly unbuckle and remove it, it wasn't until he unzipped his jeans pulling them down to his knees that rested on the bed between hers that she truly began to panic.

He read her expression and grinned playfully and slowly at her, that familiar Loki god of mischief smile playing about the corners of his beautiful lips, and placed his hands inside his boxers.

"Wait..." she started to say as he pulled out his full hard length for her eyes to rest on. God, even his cock was beautiful. It was perfect just as she had fantasized it would be for so long when he had been teasing her and kissing on her pressing it into her from under his

clothes.

He looked at her again and froze once more. She could feel herself getting wet just looking at him hold himself there. His shaft and tip poking out from the slit of his boxers and waiting eagerly to touch her.

"Mandy... do you trust me?" He repeated not lowering himself until she would answer him. She would have to if she wanted him to move close to her again.

"I'm not going to do what you think I am. I just... need to feel you. Feel you on me and have you feel me too. I can't explain it, you would just have to let me show you." His breath was ragged and his face tight with need as he waited for her to answer.

"Okay. I trust you. I'm going to regret this, aren't I?" She said playfully just laying there looking beautiful with all her long dark thick hair pooling around her neck and shoulders and all over his bed.

His gothic vixen was back and his body felt like it was tightening up with a need he had not previously known. His desire was climbing for her and he couldn't wait much longer.

"No. I can promise you that much." Billy whispered down to her and moved forward, closing the space between them and putting his hardened torso against her soft one.

She felt the heat of his smooth skin as he pressed himself into her. Only this time it was different. There was no denim in the way and she could feel EVERYTHING. His smooth member pressed against her soft and slick folds and he began to rub and slide himself along them. She could feel his length and his tip rubbing in between her labia and grinding against her small clit that was now throbbing for him. She gasped when she first felt it, her juices coating him and making him as slick as she was.

As soon as he made contact with her, he gasped loudly and panted out her name. He used one hand to guide himself along her nethers placing it into her groove and keeping it there as he moved back and



forth sliding himself along them and grinding into her core. The feeling of her silken lips sliding against his shaft was almost too much to bear. He grit his teeth clenching his jaw and tried so hard to slow down and hold back. He wanted her to orgasm from his cock rubbing against her before he did.

"Fuck... you feel so good, Mandy. I can only imagine what you would feel like inside." His words drove her wild and deep down inside she wanted to feel him there too.

She was terrified. From all her books she had ever read about first time penetration, it had said while different for everyone, it could be messy... and painful. She swallowed hard as he began picking up speed, grinding more and more desperately against her, his throbbing shaft pulsing against her moist crevice as he moaned louder and louder with each movement of his hips. He was thrusting as if he was inside, most likely imagining it to be that way as he licked his lips and groaned. His dark lashes down, thick and lovely, as his eyebrows furrowed together.

"Mandy... cum for me. Please... I can't hold out much longer." He was growling and moaning letting his hand drop from his cock letting both hands rest on the bed on each side of her.

How easy it would be for him to point himself just at a slightly different angle and wind up pressing his tip into her tight opening. This set her on edge but in a delicious way. She trusted him. He wouldn't put himself inside her without her permission.

He grunted and slowed his pace not wanting to be the first to climax before her. Lowering his strong warm body against hers he used one hand to unclasp her bra and free her lovely breasts from their cloth prison. He also tossed that to the floor and lowered his head to her cleavage, kissing and licking her flesh in between where before his cum had sat pooled from their earlier lovemaking. He moved his head to one of her breasts and dipped it to bring his hot wet mouth to her nipple.

He circled his tongue and bit her sort of rough but not enough to hurt. It made a spark of pleasure shoot up her spine all the way from her belly and he moaned into kissing her soft pink nipple carressing it

with his tongue and lips. She immediately brought her hands and fingers where they longed to be. Threading them through his blond curls and tugging, raking her fingernails against his roots and scalp, and teasing his hair, he picked up the pace of rubbing himself into her again. She could feel her clit getting very sensitive and sensed her own orgasm building. It was almost time.

"That feels so good... don't stop. You're so wet..." He whispered and looked up to hungrily capture her sinful lips locking them with his.

She continued to pet him and play with his hair while he rocked his body into her, sliding up and down, moaning loudly into their kiss. When he felt her body tense up he knew she would soon be coming all over his hard erection making them even more slick down there.

"That's it, babygirl. Cum. Cum for me, rabbit." His familiar pet name for her this time earning a loud moan of his name and several curse words instead of ire and sarcasm.

"Billy... I feel it. Oh my god... I can feel it. Don't stop... please don't stop!" She panted out as his lips held hers captive making it hard for her to speak.

He was kissing her raw and mercilessly and he picked up his pace, his thrusts getting more and more wild sliding himself against her faster and faster. Her clit was pounding and the friction was driving her over the edge. She wanted him to cum with her in unison.

"When I say it Billy... let it go and cum with me." Her words were so fucking sexy to him and he moaned in response agreeing.

Just as she was about to orgasm, they both heard his father Neil's Ford truck pull up into the driveway and both of the truck doors slam shut. Fuck. Susan and Neil were home. They stopped cutting their bliss short and looked into each other's eyes frozen in speechless terror.

(TO BE CONTINUED...)

## **22. A Vicious Cycle - A Dark Secret**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

**NOTE: None of this is organized yet and will be changed around once completed with fully organized chapters. Please be patient... I don't write from start to finish and the muse is in control in my head for this story as I write bits and pieces.**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D**

**I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D**

**Enjoy.**

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

**A VICIOUS CYCLE - A DARK SECRET**

**Summary:**

**Billy and Mandy are having the time of their young lives together in his room when suddenly the threat of being caught by Neil and Susan becomes a harsh reality. They scramble to fix themselves up and hide what they've been doing so as to escape the harsh consequences from Billy's father. Mandy does not want to get him in trouble or have Neil hurt him because of her. Billy sneaks her out the window but she stays outside the window listening out of concern for him. She can hear them fighting.**

**Unfortunately, he still gets in trouble with him despite her not being caught with him in his room. Tension builds as Mandy**

hears angry sounds and crashing noises in his bedroom. The entire argument with his father escalates while she is trying to keep quiet pressed against the back of the house. She's worried for his safety and suddenly hears Neil do something unspeakable to Billy in what she assumes is him getting physically violent with him. She had no idea it was THAT bad until now.

After the argument Billy storms off going out the front door right before she can even come around to knock on it, taking Mandy with him in his car to hide from his father. He vents and she tries to be there for him but he pushes her away and gets mean, something he thought he would never do to her. Something Mandy never expected him to. He's closed off and won't open up to her. He takes it out on her unintentionally. They share something incredibly shocking together while in his car that changes EVERYTHING. Billy takes her to her door wishing her a good night and returns home to find Max in the kitchen. They share a small moment together before he goes to bed.

NOTES: There will be mentions and depictions of slight abuse in this chapter and it will be discussed although not in extreme detail. If you are sensitive to that please do not read. I don't want anyone to get upset or triggered. Much respect. It hurt to write this chapter... but at the same time it is so very sweet and I LOVE IT. I hope you all will too.

"Shit. Shit. Shit! Oh fuck! This is SO NOT fucking happening right now!"

Billy jumped up off of her trying to get out of his bed and practically falling out of it onto the ground in the process. He recovered quickly enough and was pulling up his jeans and boxers to cover his hard on that was waning by the second.

His hands were tightly fisted while gripping his clothes, frozen in fear, and Mandy saw his back muscles tighten and his shoulders tense. His naked tanned and muscular body was breath taking even when rigid with fear and adrenaline. It glistened with sweat that he had worked up from laboring over her just a few minutes ago.

Billy stood there for a minute and cursed himself for letting time slip

by so fast without noticing. He had been so lost in being wrapped up in Mandy that he had been careless.

When he leaped up from the bed at the sound of the truck pulling into the driveway he struggled to get off of her without accidentally hurting her. He should have known better than to bring her here but he followed his lustful nature not thinking of the consequences.

He couldn't help but feel he was becoming more and more reckless and unguarded lately which was not something he could afford to do while living under Neil's roof. Being with Mandy had apparently muddled his ability for decision making throwing all caution to the wind.

At the same time, being with her made him forget about his shitty home life, and forget about his cruel father with all his impossible rules he strictly forced him to adhere to. Under Neil's roof meant under his thumb and to argue that was asking for a sound beating any day of the week.

One of the most notorious rules was to never bring females home with him with intentions to be alone with them in his room. Neil viewed all females Billy dated or flirted with as worthless whores. All of them were a disgrace for his son to dare have them present under his father's roof.

This was why he always opted to go out for dates away from the house or to use the Camaro when going on one of his lust filled trysts. Until tonight, Billy had always minded that rule. Until tonight and until being with Mandy.

Billy turned around helping her collect her clothes from the floor where he tossed them and she quickly began dressing while he was struggling to zip himself up as fast as he could. He reached for his belt growling as he tried to get it to cooperate. Grabbing his white muscle shirt tossing it on over his head he looked back to Mandy on the bed mouthing an apology. She was sad to see him put away that lovely part of him that she had a hand in making, but she had no time to mourn over it. There were more pressing matters.

Thinking quickly, once he was fully dressed, he ran over to turn on

his stereo so Neil would think he was busy just spending another typical night in his room alone.

He ran to his wall mirror to fix his messy hair that she had teased into an unruly mess with her fingers just moments before. He was trying to make himself look more presentable as if he wasn't doing anything with her in bed. He frowned when he was done and stared longingly back at her in the mirror. She could tell he was also upset they didn't get to finish what they started.

As he waited for the inevitable, Billy was soon pacing and biting his nails. Mandy was fully dressed by then and noticed Billy had locked his door to give her time to do it, but that would only keep Neil away from them for so long until he would scream at Billy to unlock it. She had never before dressed herself so fast in her entire life.

Billy reflected on his chances quickly. On a good day or night Billy would be passive and obey resulting in Neil keeping his cool better but still be extremely insulting. On a rebellious one, Billy would argue and talk back to him and wind up earning either some form of physical punishment if not purely verbal and emotional in place of it. Which one would it be tonight?

Mandy had frowned while getting dressed as she watched Billy and how truly terrified he was. His look tore at her heart and she felt miserable for him. This was a side of himself he had never showed to her before, even in all the other times she had seen Neil terrorize him verbally when she was around, but it was obvious what was happening to him.

He was deathly afraid of Neil. This bad boy who pushed everyone else around and was head honcho of Hawkins High was absolutely terrified of his own father. It was so unlike him with his usual cool and cocky composure as well as his Alpha male attitude. She wished she could just hold him again in his bed and make Neil disappear. She absolutely HATED when Neil did this to him, did this to their whole family.

Mandy feared what his father would do to him because of her. She could tell that Neil saw how Billy looked at her whenever she had been over here and that he had something going on between them

more than just study buddies.

She imagined if Neil and Susan found her here, especially in the nude on his bed, there would most likely be scathing words and severe rage from his dad and who knows how far he would take it? Grounding and taking away things from Billy didn't seem satisfying enough of a punishment for a vicious man like Neil.

Billy knew all too well with bitter familiarity how he liked to punish. He took his due like the Devil with a pound of flesh from whoever crossed him and his favorite to take it from was his own son. He saw that Mandy looked as scared as he did but how could she possibly fathom the full extent of it? He had always hidden that from her. Neil never struck him when she was around.

He did not want her to have ANY of it directed at her. He could take it but he refused her to be at the mercy of Neil's wrath and be verbally attacked or to have to witness it.

Billy froze when he heard Neil's heavy footsteps coming down the hall. Within minutes all of them entering the house, and Max running into her room to hide from the fighting, there was a loud pounding on the door and both Billy and Mandy jumped. She had just finally put on her boots. She looked nervously at him with panic rising in her throat and a frightened expression equally matching his.

"Just a minute! I'm kinda busy in here, dad!" Billy yelled towards the door and rushed over to her to kiss her quickly on the lips urging her to go.

His response went ignored by Neil who was still repeatedly pounding on the door his angry command for Billy to open it and turn his damn music down.

"I'm coming! Hang on a minute, please?!" Billy said trying to buy time for them.

Billy was letting out a string of obscenities that would make a sailor blush. She watched him run to his bedroom window preparing an exit for her. He lifted open the window and moved his dresser sliding it out of the way.

"You can climb out this way, okay? Go around front and hide. Wait for me to come out after I deal with this." He looked a mess and worried for HER safety rather than his own? It broke her heart.

"Okay, Billy. Calm down, alright? I'll be quiet and careful. He will never know I was here. I'll look for you out by your car. Get to me if you can." She said trying to calm him somewhat and help him relax before having to deal with Neil.

He nodded and agreed to it. It was a plan even if a half baked one. She hoped they could pull it off and that Neil wouldn't suspect a thing. The unceasing pounding on the door sounded like Neil was about to kick the door down and soon.

"Take my hand... I will help you climb out safely." Billy gave her a quick kiss on her lips moaning softly into it as she approached him and took his hand.

He had whispered it to her so Neil wouldn't hear him over the sounds of Metallica playing in the background. Taking his strong warm hand she climbed over the window frame being careful not to kick anything over on his dresser. Looking back she did not want to let go of him but he forced her to.

"Wait for me..." he said gazing into her eyes, pointing her to run around to the front of the house. She nodded and disappeared from his view.

Once she was clear on the other side he pushed the dresser back as quickly and quietly as he could and shut the window just as silently. He turned to face Neil at his door while Mandy made her escape outside into the dark.

He had just enough time to light a cigarette and walk over to the door to let Neil in. On his way over, he turned off the stereo keeping up appearances, and when he saw she was clear from the window he unlocked it, opened it, and hung his body halfway out the door frame keeping it semi closed speaking to Neil.

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Outside Mandy flattened herself against the house and felt horrible at how terrified he was. She blamed herself for bringing this upon them both for agreeing to come back here with him. Had she have been stronger and resisted him at the theatre, maybe this wouldn't have happened.

Standing there she heard some of the argument. His father was saying something about how hard his work day had been with him being upset about having to pick up Max from the arcade on top of it all, which was Billy's personal responsibility.

Neil was livid that his "no good, useless, poor excuse of a burnout son" was a no show to collect his "little sister" as he called her, much to Billy's irritation.

Susan was trying to prevent his eventual explosion at Billy but not very well, mostly being silent or talking to Max instead. Her weakness made Mandy's stomach churn and feel sick. A mother was supposed to love and protect her children, even if they were step children.

She understood the importance of taking care of Max and watching her. Step sibling or blood related or not, he WAS her older brother and had a responsibility to her too. But to go as far as Neil did when angry was inexcusable. They acted as if they couldn't spend time with her too or occasionally give her rides to and from school as any parent should.

They always laid it all on Billy. He had no freedoms or privacy in his own room let alone a house that was supposed to be his home too. At the same time it wasn't fair of him to lash out his anger onto Max and blame her for it. Mandy new Max had nothing to do with this and hated it as much as she and Billy did.

If anyone should be responsible for this mistake tonight, it should be her. She felt a huge amount of guilt for having distracted Billy so much that he would forget to stop by the Plaza and pick Max up, instead focusing all his attention on her. In a way she felt partially responsible for the horror Billy might have to face tonight.

Mandy's heart pounded as Neil's tirade seemed to last forever,

although it had only been a few minutes. From outside, Mandy could hear Neil's booming voice lecturing his son and Billy's deep but softer voice trying to defend himself while also trying not to sound like he was arguing with him. She couldn't make out the words but stayed there anyway because she was afraid for him as she heard the altercation.

She could hear the venom absolutely dripping from his father's words and despite Billy trying to defend himself, she heard what came next and cupped her mouth while flinching up against the backside of the house. She was trying hard to suppress any sounds of shock that came out of her.

As the voices got louder she heard some crashing noises and objects that sounded like they were being broken. She could hear him shoving Billy around into things, up against things, and then slapping Billy very hard, most likely across his face.

Billy didn't make a sound in all of this, ever the stonefaced warrior, so he had most likely taken the hit and was standing silently waiting for it to all be over. Neil shouted at him one last time before she could hear him exiting Billy's room and slamming the door.

After a few minutes of complete silence, Mandy thought she heard a soft sobbing sound and that it sounded like Billy. He threw something and it hit the wall with a soft thud.

Mandy could feel tears begin to backup in her eyes as she struggled to keep from crying out loud feeling his pain. She covered her mouth tight with her hands to muffle her noises.

In addition to his soft crying, she could also hear Billy cussing and the sounds of glass and other broken objects being picked up by him in his room. Billy was cleaning Neil's mess while trying hard not to make a sound, but it sounded like he was in pieces more than the things Neil trashed in his room.

Mandy's heart was breaking for him just knowing he had to deal with this most likely every single day and random enough to constantly put him on edge. Mandy KNEW Neil's type and could imagine what he put his son through.

She risked peeking into the window and saw him trying to straighten up Neil's destruction while wiping his eyes repeatedly, his long dark lashes wet and sparkling with tears.

Mandy set a stern face, wiped her own eyes trying to look normal, then walked away and around the side of the house as quietly as she could manage to approach the front door. She NEEDED to get to him and be there for him as soon as possible.

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She was going to hide and wait, but she grew bold because of her anger at Neil for hurting him. She wanted to come in and make sure it would stop simply by her presence being there. Most likely Neil wouldn't take too kindly to someone showing up on his doorstep this late at night. At this moment however, she didn't care what he would or wouldn't like. He had done a horrible thing to Billy. She needed to make sure he was okay.

Taking a huge sigh and mustering all her courage, she went to knock lightly on the Hargrove residence's door, but it opened up before she could even touch it. She heard sounds of the T.V. going in the living room. Neil was watching sports drinking a beer and it was Billy at the door. He was dressed warm for the cold night air and as promised, he had come around the front to talk with her after everything that happened calmed down.

His eyes were slightly red although he tried to hide from her that he had been crying. He had no idea that she heard it all.

Mandy could tell he was attempting to be strong for her hiding his pain but it was evident on his face despite his mask he put on. He shut the door quickly behind him and grabbing his keys he then took Mandy's hand shushing her to be quiet leading her out to his car where it would be dark enough that Neil wouldn't see them.

When they got in quickly and quietly, she noticed the reddening mark across his cheek where apparently Neil had hit him. That would explain the horribly loud slap she had heard from outside the window to his room.

"Billy... your face..." She began to say trying to reach out and sooth it but he flashed her an angry warning look that told her it was not up for discussion.

"Leave it." He snarled out at her. He grabbed her hand firmly stopping her from touching where the welt was beginning to swell. She gasped but he released her gently letting go of his grip on her. His face showed he instantly regretted doing that to her.

"Fuck. Just forget it. Let me walk you home. Show's over." She didn't really want to leave him like this.

"No. I'm not going anywhere until I know for a fact you are safe and will be okay. I don't want to leave your side. Please don't make me." She was on the verge of tears and couldn't stand that he wouldn't let her touch him.

He was staring at the windshield for a few moments like he was made of stone. Devoid of all emotion. At this point Mandy didn't even care if her parents would worry sick about where she was right now or if Tucker never got to talk to her about her bailing before the night was over. All she cared about was Billy and making sure he was okay. She couldn't go home until she was certain.

The mask finally faltered and his anger burned it away and blazed over it.

"Fuck! Fucking asshole! I fucking HATE him!" Billy said through his teeth as he slammed his hands on his steering wheel a few times trying hard not to let the tears that were welling up in his eyes fall where she would be able to see them.

Mandy jumped a bit at his sudden outburst but sat silently letting him vent indirectly to her. She just waited being patient with him until he was ready.

He wiped his eyes trying to hide his tears. It wasn't working very well. Mandy tried to touch him but he pulled away and she was trying to think of some way she could comfort him without him getting upset or feel like she was pitying him. He was still nursing his ego out of humiliation and he was very fragile at the moment, that

much was certain.

"It's my fault." She said softly looking at the floor of the front seat. He turned and looked at her as if she were completely insane then turned away again.

"I'm guessing you heard ALL of that, didn't you? I told you to go out the window and get to the front of the house. Why do you never listen to me, Mandy?" He semi shouted at her his fury unable to be quenched to soften his tone even when so close to her and speaking directly to her. She knew he was yelling at his father, not at her.

"I did. And it's my fault. I caused this. I'm so very sorry, Billy." Mandy felt like she couldn't breathe her chest was so tight.

For some reason he couldn't look her in the eyes right now. He was more than likely afraid for her to see his loss of control and his temper or see his shame. Either way she wished he would just let her hold him or cup his face in her hands and kiss the pain away.

"Don't be fucking stupid. Don't say such stupid childish things." He was getting meaner now. Sounding more like his father and less like himself. She put on a brave face and explained anyway.

"It's not childish or stupid. It's the TRUTH. I should have reminded you in case you forgot you needed to pick up Max today. It's my fault you forgot because I agreed to be with you and come here. Today is her usual day to go to the arcade and I completely blocked it out because of my happiness of being with you." Her heart wanted to explode. It was silent between them for what felt like an eternity.

Without saying a word, he shook his head disagreeing with her adamantly and scowled at the idea. It wasn't her problem. He had to accept taking his stripes for fucking things up.

"No. It's my burden. She's always MY fucking problem." His shoulders were trembling.

"Billy, please don't blame her. She's just a kid. I'm here for you. Do you want to talk about-" she started to ask when he cut her off. She reached for his face with her hand to soothe him a little.

"There's NOTHING to talk about! So just mind your own damn business!" He snapped furiously at her, his words etched with pain, despite his anger trying to cover over it to hide it from her.

He had pushed her hand away and recoiled into himself away from her reach both physically and emotionally. His voice was terrible in that moment. A shrieking monster with an equally frightening visage to match it. She could never think of him as a monster but that's how he made her feel in this exact moment. Neil was turning him into one. She wanted to save him. To spare him of it.

She pulled her hand back and got silent again. Mandy didn't know what to say or do now, except to sit quietly and then turn to him to let him see just what an effect this was having on her too. She was familiar with his suffering. He didn't exactly have the trauma market cornered all to himself.

Her tears were falling now. She was unable to stop them from coming and when he saw them he bit back on his anger realizing that in his outburst he had taken it out on her so much that he had done this to her. He had made her break slightly for him in agony.

His face was mixed with sadness, guilt, and anger at himself for treating her this way when she was only trying to help. Looking into her eyes he tried to come up with something to say, anything really, to stop her tears. Just a few minutes ago they had been so happy, wrapped up in each other, kissing and feeling each other's warmth. And now there was this cold silence and distance hanging over them as well as in between them.

Her tears were a reminder that he was incapable of loving her the way she needed him to as well as his ability to handle her heart with care. He HATED seeing females cry. It reminded him of his mother so long ago back in California. Many nights he would try to console her when she was upset from Neil hurting him as a small boy and then turning his fierce wrath on her when she tried to defend him. It was this sickening vicious cycle and he was trying so hard to break it. If not for himself, the memory of his mother, then most assuredly for Mandy.

"Mandy, I... fuck. I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to..." Mandy could see

that the reality of what he was saying and doing to her and his guilt of pushing her away was now sinking in.

She wiped her tears away and trembled as he reached for her. She was trying so hard not to make this all about her right now, this was definitely about Billy and his pain, but how could she not also be hurt when he wouldn't talk to her. He wouldn't allow her to reach in and heal his pain and be supportive, and it killed her.

"Billy... you think you are all alone in this. You're NOT. You think I don't know about pain, suffering, loss, or cruelty from the hands of someone who is supposed to love and care for me? Supposed to protect me? But I do. Believe me."

At first Mandy was angry. But then she began to speak more softly to him in the dark, her voice getting choked up from the pain of the unwanted memories. The darkness couldn't even hide her face from him or her unstoppable tears.

When she did look at him, she noticed he looked confused. Billy had always thought she was a little princess. Perfect home. Perfect life. Perfect everything. Her family adored her. She had everything she could ever want or need. A safe place to call home, a nice room, nice friends, and a caring loving family. What did she know about his pain or loss? Before he could ask she answered as if reading his mind.

"I'm adopted, Billy. Calvin is not even my true biological brother. My current parents adopted me when I was much younger. I had an abusive relative that hurt me and I was rehomed with a foster family. That foster family turned into a permanent home for me with Mr and Mrs Hawkins, my parents I am living with now."

"What?" He said not sure what else to say in that exact moment. It was catching up to him still and he wondered if he had heard her correctly. The look on his face was one of shock.

"I never would have been able to tell... you all seem like such a loving family, really close." He replied softly, barely a whisper, his pang of envy obvious.

Often when he had come over to pick her up and take her out, if her

parents and little brother were there he saw how they interacted together as a family. It secretly deep down was everything he had wished Neil, Susan, and Max could have been.

He saw Mandy's mother and how much she loved and doted on her and it often made him suffer a heartbreaking deep ache and ancient longing for his real birth mother that he lost a long time ago. He had never told Mandy about her or what had happened to him while growing up as a child. The true extent of Neil's cruelty and his long history of being abused by him. He was tempted to do so tonight since she was willing to share this with him in complete confidence.

Mandy was no longer facing him but looking out the window of his car and still able to hear the shock in his voice. He sat there taking this all in.

"I'm sorry. I'm sorry about what you went through. You should never have had to go through that." He was sincere. For once in his life he was setting aside his pain and anger and making room for someone else. He was being selfless instead of selfish and was including Mandy in his world where before it had only been him as King of the castle.

Mandy was so good and kind. She had her pain in the ass moments but she was a good person with a good heart. She cared about people and did her best to stay out of trouble. She was his exact opposite and yet she had a painful burden she carried just like he did.

"Well... bad things happen to good people, Billy. It's just how it is. But it's what we do with the pain and our future lives that really matters." She was so wise beyond her years it amazed him. Listening to her level with him and open up a deep wound she had hidden, the scars she had never let him see before, he realized now more than ever just how truly precious a gift she was for him to know.

He was calmer now. Maybe hearing of her past hardships in life somehow made him feel better with the fact that he was not alone anymore in his own suffering. They both knew life was truly not fair and really messed up. Bad things happened to good people, this was true, and neither one of them had been the exception to that.



"I never wanted to talk about it with you most likely for the same reason you never seem to want to talk to me about personal things in your life when it came to Neil, Susan, and Max. Or to open up to me about why you are so angry all the time. Why you do mean things sometimes to people and act dangerous and wreckless. Why Neil hurts you and how you internalize it instead of talking about it and letting it out. I know you never wanted to share things from your life with me that were too painful to bring up. I understand where you are coming from because I suffered something similar. That's my secret... and now I want to share it with you hoping it will help you overcome whatever your secret is."

"I didn't want you to know all of that because what good would it have done? It would have only made you pity me and I don't need anyone to do that. It's not like you can stop him so what would be the point? No one can."

He said softly not trying to sound mean. He was just trying to be honest. He knew Neil had a way of playing nice, faking, putting on a mask and making people like him. No one ever suspected him of treating Billy the way he did, besides Mandy who had been the only person, friend, girl, to have ever come into that house to witness it.

Before her it was only them, the Hargove-Mayfield family unified in all their fucked up twisted glory. Secrets like skeletons in closets were buried in that house and if the walls could talk it would be deafening to hear.

"Besides, I know I can take it. I don't go down easy without a fight. I've lasted this long. But you... I can't wrap my head around someone as kind and gentle as you ever being put through this."

She tried to smile, but she knew he wasn't handling it very well at all. She had witnessed his fighting and scrapping in school, his bloody lips, his bruises, his cracked bleeding scabbed over knuckles. Half the time she couldn't tell if they came from Neil or from him getting into fights with other people on campus or around town.

But he was repeating that cycle and she simply wanted to help him break it for good and escape his personal hell he was trapped in. Her smile was overpowered by her tears and pain from ripping open the

old wound and letting it bleed proverbially all over them awashing them in that grief was too much to bear at the moment.

"Billy, I've seen the marks and cuts I just never knew they were also from your dad. I thought they were only from fights you would get into or pick. And we can work on that. It doesn't have to be this way for you. I can help you with Neil somehow, someway, I know I can. We will figure it out."

All he did was nod and then stay quiet so she could continue telling him what she felt she needed to.

"As for me, it's completely true. Before Katherine and Rick adopted me, I was in a not so ideal living situation. I had a very mean relative take me into their home, an uncle, when my real mother took off and abandoned me. He was the only one left in my family that would bother to care for me."

Mandy trembled as she recalled the painful past that lead her up to this point in her life.

"My mother ran off to be with a new husband after my father died and my grandparents were in a home. I had no aunts or other uncles. I didn't even have any older siblings. So my uncle was the only one to step up and take me in under his roof. At first he was nice, but it was all an act for the ones placing me into his custody. Once things were finalized, he changed into a monster."

He thought of his own mother abandoning him. Mandy knew that pain deep down just as he did. He never would have known because Katherine was so good to her as if a natural mother to her. Billy clenched his hands into fists just thinking about what she might tell him next about her piece of shit uncle. Just the thought of anyone doing anything like that to her made him want to hunt down the sick bastard and obliterate him from existence.

"Everyday I was made a victim by him. Belittled by him verbally or abused by him physically. I was lucky he didn't take it further than that, if you know what I mean."

She sniffed her nose obviously because of her crying and covered her

face with her hands. Mandy didn't want him to see her like this. She had tried for years to bury it and to forget. Now it was all coming to the surface bringing the painful memories along with it.

"Yeah, I get what you mean by that. You're still... intact." He moved closer to her and pulled her into his arms. His warmth surrounded her and he breathed into her neck as he held her close.

"Yes, I'm intact. Let's just put it that way and not try too hard to define that any further. My uncle never had an interest in hurting me that way. It sounds bad to say this but I guess I was lucky for that at least. Well, when someone noticed the marks on my body after years of this going on because he put up a good cover hiding who he truly was, it was dealt with soon enough. I was ten or eleven when I got removed from his custody when Child Protective Services got involved."

She tried to keep her voice even as she told him her deepest darkest secret. He sat still and listened without interrupting.

"They told me it was a miracle I survived it. That he didn't wind up killing me by going too far and that I didn't become another statistic. A miracle that I had maintained my innocence in all of it as well. Even now I don't remember much of it because my young battered mind chose to black it out to spare me later on and help me overcome it. Some things I remember if I have a post traumatic flash back."

Billy looked to his hands and wanted to cut them off for using them to grip Mandy the way he did. He had undoubtedly set her off by doing that.

"They removed me far away from him putting a protective order on me, gave me a new identity, and put me in a foster home with a nice couple until they could find me a better family to adopt and raise me. That's how Mr and Mrs Hawkins first met me. They were the original foster parents. But they had fallen in love with me and thought of me as their own daughter and Calvin's older sister so they couldn't bear to give me up. I stayed and it became official. I became a Hawkins. No one knows about this. Only you, me, and my adoptive parents."

He sat listening to her and felt her shake in his arms. He felt like such

a prick for grabbing her wrist and yelling at her. She knew what it felt like to be cornered, struck, pushed down verbally until reduced to nothing. To feel worthless and unloved, just like he did. They both understood the pain of simply wanting someone to just accept and love them but instead of love all they recieved was abandonment, pain, and torment both physically and psychologically at the hands of those they trusted the most.

"I won't tell anyone. This will go with me to my grave. Mandy, I'm... I'm so very sorry. I didn't know."

She lifted her head from her hands and turned to look at him until they were facing each other. Even when crying, she looked so damn beautiful. She couldn't be anything BUT beautiful to him. Even if she was broken in certain parts of herself like he was, he would still think she was perfect. He cared for her with all he had left in his heart, even if it wasn't much.

"You couldn't have. Let's not be so eager for you to go to that grave, Hargrove." She tried to give him a smile and make a joke. But part of it was serious. If Neil had completely lost it and went too far, he COULD potentially wind up killing Billy. It had now become her worst fear now that she knew the true extent of how violent and abusive Neil was getting with him.

"It's because of this that I live my life closed off from the world. It's why I don't go to parties. It's why I hate being bullied in school. It's also why I am so quiet, shy, and reserved. I'm lucky I even have friends like Nikki, Tucker, and Alex. They saw something in me and accepted me as I am, regardless of how awkward or aloof I can be."

She gave a soft little laugh and when she attempted to wipe her tears away he stopped her and moved in to kiss them away. He kissed her tears wiping them all away with his lips and tried to help her heal. She sighed and snuggled into him.

"Rabbit... I will NEVER hurt you like your uncle did. You have my word on that. Never. I could never do that to you. Please believe me."

He had leaned in closer to her and begged her while soothing her trail of tears with his lips and kissing her all over her face where they

fell. He looked her in the eyes as he said this to make sure she could see how serious he was. This was his OWN rule. One he would NEVER break. Neil's rules didn't mean shit compared to this one.

"I believe you, Billy. I trust you. But can you please do me a favor? Can you promise me something?" She asked softly as he held her face there gently, his breath sweetly washing over her lips and face with how close he was to her in the dark.

"Anything. Anything for you, rabbit. No one else could get that from me. Name it and it's yours." Her heart skipped a beat when he said it so sincerely.

He was a tough guy. A bad boy. A rebel. A wild child. And as her romance books would call him, a handsome rogue or a seductive rake. He was trouble but he was HER trouble. He was all those things. Even so, she knew he had a good heart deep down and she was glad to have discovered it and helped to foster that part of him. She was glad she had been wrong about him based on her original observations and assumptions and that she actually took a chance on him.

Billy was set to do what she asked as he held her there keeping her warm in his Camaro. She could ask him to do the silliest thing and he would be bound to do it.

"Please... if you know how it feels. If you know the pain of what we have been through... can you PLEASE stop scaring and hurting Max? Please stop taking it out on her. I know she loves you even when she's being sassy and immature with you. She's innocent and doesn't deserve this vicious cycle. I broke mine and you can break yours too. Please protect her at all costs from Neil. Don't let him hurt her, do everything in your power to make sure she is safe too, okay?"

She waited for his answer feeling like the ground had fallen out from beneath them where they sat.

He didn't say no. He didn't pull away. He didn't get angry. He simply nodded in complete silence with a serious expression and a perfect understanding. Billy was going to try and be a better bigger step brother from this moment on.

He was going to try and bond with Max, protect her, and treat her better. But all in good time. Baby steps.

She would be beside herself with disbelief and most likely it would take some time for her to see and realize it. But she knew their damaged relationship could be restored if he would just try.

"And Billy? Anytime you or Max need to... you both can come to me here at this house. Don't be afraid to come here. I will always be here for you two. Always. My door is always open and even my window. All I have to do is come over and I will say something to my parents. They will understand and help me to protect you both I know they will. Whatever it takes."

He nodded without knowing what to say. How could he thank her for being so good and kind to him offering both he and Max sanctuary, support, and understanding? No one had EVER given that to him before. They all just looked at him like he was a loser, a trouble maker, a burnout, and a total waste of oxygen to exist in this world. He understood he lashed out and got violent and mean, but no one ever saw past that until Mandy came along.

Billy was so moved he didn't know how to respond, he just held her never wanting to stop. They stayed that way in the stillness and just held onto each other before he would walk her to her door and say goodnight. He wanted to give her the sweetest kiss when dropping her off and honestly, he wished he could lay beside her in the dark in her bed until sunrise not leaving her side tonight.

She smiled at him and it was in that very moment that he realized that he couldn't live without her. Breathe without her. He couldn't even feel without her.

"When you are ready, I want you to open up to me and tell me everything Billy. In your own good time. Don't rush and don't force it. Just let it come out naturally when you feel you want to. I will be there for you and I will listen. I promise."

"I will. One day. For now, rabbit, let's help you feel better and get you home so you can be comfortable and get some sleep. You've had a very rough day today and I want you to rest and feel better."

She thought it was sweet how he was thinking of her but not even thinking of what he had been through with his dad tonight. She simply held onto him and tried to comfort him by holding him securely.

Mandy also worried about Max and hoped Neil would never be stupid enough to hurt her as well. That would be the final straw if Susan sat back weak and unresponsive doing nothing while that monster hurt her own little girl.

She doubted it would happen, Billy had said Neil only hurts him and that was bad enough, but she was thankful just as he was that Neil wouldn't lift a finger to touch Max knowing that would be the end of him if he ever did. Billy had sworn to her that if he went to hurt Max, Billy would not hesitate to protect her and would do everything in his power to stop him, even if that meant killing him in their self defense and then calling the cops to clear their names.

Billy helped her out of his car and walked her to her door. He said goodnight to her and kissed her softly. He moaned but he was gentle.

He had taken her face in his hands suddenly and finally captured her lips giving her a chaste and pure loving kiss that made her heart swell inside her chest. It was a true kiss without anything sexual or hungry mixing into it. It was almost like it was their very first true kiss ever. She could feel how much he cared for her in that moment when in the way he did it made it feel right and also romantic.

And tonight with what she shared with him, it would change everything between them. In time he would be able to open up to her more and share his secrets and she would also protect him from Neil's anger and abuse every chance she could along with Max too if he ever dared try to hurt her.

When she disappeared inside he quietly made his way over back to Neil's house. His fists were clenched and he dreaded having to walk back in there. Lucky for him, Neil and Susan had gone to bed and only Max was in the kitchen getting a glass of water.

...

"Billy... are you okay?"

Max said from the darkness of the living room while holding a glass of something and drinking. She was sitting on the couch apparently waiting for him to walk in. Why, he had no idea. She never cared before and never bothered to ask. But tonight he felt her concern for him thick in her small light voice.

She had nearly made Billy jump giving him a heart attack as he came through the door and quietly as he could instead of opting for his window. He had guessed she also had heard the fight. She always could most likely. These walls were thin and cheap.

Any other time he would have waved her off or made some mean comment telling her to mind her own damn business or to shut up or piss off. But she had sincere concern in her eyes for him, he could see them and her look once his eyes adjusted, and for the first time ever he was able to see it, accept it, and allow it. To soak it in and feel it. Feel everything. He remembered Mandy's words to him about not taking it out on her and that she loves him.

"I'm okay, shitbird."

She scowled at the disgusting permanent nickname he had given her but instead of it feeling mean with animosity, she felt him being gentle with it and was shocked he actually answered her. She dared to come over to him and sit next to him when he slumped down onto the couch the opposite end from her. She handed him her glass of water and he took it hesitantly and then sipping on it slowly.

"Thanks." His thank you made her stare at him wide eyed. He had never thanked her for anything. Let alone even have a conversation with her or take something from her hands.

"No, you're clearly not okay. You're talking to me and being nice to me. Do you have a concussion?"

His soft laugh startled her and she also dared to reach out and with a shaking hand she felt his forehead. He wasn't warm so it couldn't be a fever. He couldn't be sick.



"No, really, I'm fine. Here, take your glass of water and hurry to bed. If Neil hears us up and being noisy he will wake up and start his shit again. I'm going to bed. I'm fucking tired as hell."

He yawned stretching then wincing when his face throbbed and hurt from his skin of his cheek going tight from the movement and laughter. Max frowned and could see the red welt even in the dim dark of the room.

He got up off the couch leaving a confused and very much startled Max to wonder just what had happened between the time Neil had hurt him in his bedroom and when he had come back home. She had a hunch however, that it was because of Mandy.

She heard her footsteps around the side of the house near her bedroom window when she snuck to the front. Max knew she had been in there with him and that it was the reason why Billy took so long to open the door to Neil. She must have spoken to him and he probably walked her home before coming back.

Max really liked Mandy. Him being around her almost all the time was making him less angry and mean and she could see the change within him, even before tonight. She half smiled in the dark of the living room and then finished her glass of water and went to bed.

(TO BE CONTINUED...)

## **23. In The Still Of The Night**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

**NOTE:** None of this is organized yet and will be changed around once completed with fully organized chapters. Please be patient... I don't write from start to finish and the muse is in control in my head for this story as I write bits and pieces.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

**IN THE STILL OF THE NIGHT...**

**Summary:**

**No summary. Just bask in the glow. :D**

Billy was with her in her bedroom. He was pressed close against her body, warm and alive, and ravishing her mouth with his own. Assaulting and messaging her lips in full force and mixing his wonderful tongue with hers in a clash of savage kisses. She had waited so long to get him into her bed this time where they would not be disturbed like they had been last time when she was in his.

Tonight was going to be THE night. She was sure of it.

It was the perfect night. Her parents were out of town. Calvin was being watched over at a friend's house while staying for a weekend long sleepover. They would have free reign of the entire place all to themselves the entire time her folks were gone. Her mother and father had said they trusted her to guard the house and that she was deserving of some alone time. They had also told her Billy was not to come over but she didn't care. She ached to see him, to touch him, to simply be with him. But she couldn't have him even if she wanted.

They had not been able to see each other in days. He had explained to her in a short but desperate phone call sneaking it one night that his father had placed him on house arrest and had grounded him from driving the Camaro. That Neil had been giving him personal lifts to and from school to make sure he went. Had even gone as far as working something out with the principal and school staff as well as his teachers to keep tabs on him.

Neil's control over him knew no bounds and now even the school was compliant in it because of his troublemaking ways. He had been placed under strict orders to focus on his classes and school work when on campus and forbidden to go anywhere after school to work on his homework in his room.

At first Mandy thought it was an excuse to ditch her and it hurt. But she saw how he wasn't even able to take time to talk to her or anyone else and how miserable he was around school without contact with her. He would still whisper to her behind her desk but even that had been brief with her to let her know he was okay and would be free soon making it up to her.

His forced isolation by the hands of his father would explain why he wasn't talking to her as much and not even able to be around her even on breaks between classes. Neil had him at his complete mercy. Their connection had been reduced to very little over her phone line in her room and only if Billy could sneak the calls without being caught by him or anyone in his house which wasn't often.

The long days and nights of not being able kiss, hold, or touch her, finally causing him to become undone with his need for her. Not being able to taste her and to see her. It was too much and it had broken him down in the worst way. He had told her this much when

whispering to her in English class and her heart broke to not be able to turn around and talk to him for fear of getting him in worse trouble with Neil. Perhaps even causing the abuse to ramp up at home.

He had tried using his hands while moaning into the phone for her as she talked him down some nights but it just wasn't the same. Talking on the phone about what they wanted to do together just wasn't enough. Simply talking about it was never enough. All the dirty talk and mutual masturbation in the world while restricted to small moments together on her phone line would NEVER be enough. It wasn't healing their loneliness for one another. The phonecalls were all they had and that barely held them together anymore.

Finally, when enough had been enough, something inside of him snapped, and he had decided he was no longer able to take it. So on this perfect night he had finally had enough of it. He must have snuck out not caring about the consequences and he had come to her at her front door, not the window this time, knowing her family wasn't there.

When she heard his frantic knocking and had run down the stairs to answer it somehow knowing it was him, his face was full of desire and hurt. His painful need and lust for her, his body wracked with the sting of withdrawal of not having felt her warm soft figure against his in days.

"Baby... I'm here. I couldn't wait anymore. I couldn't. I don't care if I get caught. I HAD to see you."

His breath was ragged and intense barely controlling his hands that longed to be all over her. He could barely stand it anymore. Having no contact with her for this damn long due to his father Neil grounding him over some imagined slight or another had finally taken its toll and she could see it. He was shaking and just as lost as she, both internally and externally.

Practically jumping into his arms to kiss him hungrily, she pulled him inside the doorway and he shut it behind him locking it. She was tangling her fingers in his hair, playing with the curly strands, and kissing him passionately while letting her tongue clash with his.

Their lips locked deliciously together never wanting to part.

"I missed you... so bad..." She had whispered against his lips between their kissing and he groaned aching inside for her feeling the same way.

He had kissed her all the way up the stairs taking his jacket and shirt off throwing it carelessly wherever after she helped to unbutton it to put her hands on his firm warm chest. He was showing her with his mouth and body not needing any words to tell her he felt the same. She trailed her fingers along his muscles and savoring the touch she had longed to feel for far too long.

She backed up carefully along the stairs with each step, not breaking their kiss, leaving her black silken robe on for his hands to remove once they arrived to her soft formerly empty bed. How she had longed to feel him in it with his warmth laying next to her she couldn't put into words. It was cold and lifeless without him.

At the top of the stairs he picked her up with her shapely legs wrapping tight around his waist and he moved them into her bedroom. She opened the door for him since his hands were occupied in holding her, and as he carried her inside through the doorway he sighed happily into her kisses. When they reached her bed he practically semi piledrive-dropped her down onto it roughly making her bounce but careful not to hurt her.

She gasped and loved his display of dominance in that moment. He was now between her thighs on his knees sunk down into her carpet while leaning over her and placing himself in between her legs that dangled at the edge of the mattress.

"Be with me tonight..." He tried to say in between moving his lips against hers widening and deepening their kiss with a force he had never known him to possess until her. His body hungrily looming over her and grinding his groin into her core, his bulge pressing into her aggressively through the thin fabric of her robe and panties.

She unzipped his jeans impatiently fumbling with the zipper in between them and he practically died the second she slipped her needy soft hands inside his boxers to stroke him harder for her once

they hit the bed.

"Mmmmm... I think he's missed you too." Billy said playfully as she rubbed him tenderly along his lengthy shaft, her small smooth hands feeling good against his hot skin.

Continuing to kiss her ferociously, eventually he pulled away and slipped her panties off of her to touch her dripping wet nethers, feeling her folds pooling with her juices for him, she was so ready for him it was insane. Just the sight of him and sharing her lips with his had gotten her wet and excited for him. It shocked him just how moist he could make her within seconds.

He was now running his hands all over her body, warming her up with every touch as they kissed passionately and endlessly. She was rubbing him slow at first and then more urgently as he ground his hardened length against her hand. He moved his mouth from her lips to her neck and fastened it to her throat as if it were a lifeline as he licked, and kissed, and sucked on her skin, soaking up her moans with his mouth each time she made them.

"I needed your hands on me so bad. It's all I could think about when you were making those ridiculously hot noises for me over the phone last night. You're a bad girl."

His breathless confession into her mouth as he called her that made her grin and swell with pride knowing she could do that to him. The sounds he had made for her had lit her up from the inside as well driving her crazy with need to feel him touch her. Her hands weren't his hands and did no justice for the longing she felt.

She was writhing under him moaning loudly, panting and feeling the heat and weight of him pressing her down into the mattress through her thin black silky robe he had given her to wear for him if he wound up staying the night. For tonight. For any other night he wanted it on her only to eventually disrobe it from her slowly or tear it off trying.

Crying out his name repeatedly, clearly unable to control herself even less than he could, she was just as much in heat for him as he was for her. His jeans were now bunched down to his ankles with his boxers

allowing his once soft member to harden and grow while pressing into her stomach. She felt him against her in all his masculine glory.

"Now, Mandy. I have to have you now. It's been too long... please, rabbit. Let me taste you."

His voice said hotly in her ear while he nibbled and bit her earlobe gently between his teeth breathing into it with hitching breath. She felt her stomach cramp up with that special fire and longing that even she could not deny or control any longer.

When he pulled away from teasing her ear with his lips, tongue, and teeth she looked up into his face in the dim darkness of her bedroom and saw how badly he wanted her. It made her heart ache for him to see him like that.

He groaned when she pushed him down along her body opening her gorgeous legs for him and showing her beautiful mound between her thighs. The dark patch of soft hair above her crevice looking trimmed and beautiful. He licked his lips and lowered his head even more without needing her coaxing and pressed his mouth urgently into her exploring her sex.

Eating her out right there at the edge of the bed, he let his tongue dive down deep in between her velvet folds lapping at them, driving her insane by working her over skillfully as he devoured her in the most primal way. Gliding his large warm tongue along her slit while slicking her up with his own saliva it mixed with her fluids making her doubly wet. Enjoying the taste and smell of her there he was latching on to her small bud of a clit tonguing it in slow soft circles which made her wiggle into him with delight.

Eventually he went faster making her want to scream from the intense pleasure. She was sopping wet for him so much that it was coating his chin and dripping down underneath it as he ate her out hungrily with wild abandon. His head had been between her soft milky thighs at least for a half an hour if not longer, making wave after wave of orgasm wash over her. Each climax stronger than the last. She tugged at his curls and pulled him into her practically riding his face not able to get enough.

When she was still, her breath fast and labored from cumming for him, she lifted his head up and looked into his beautiful half lidded eyes and his long lovely lashes as he grinned at her in the dark.

"Please. I want to." She panted out and he felt his length twitch for her at the thought of it.

It was in her eyes what she wanted. She wanted to please him with her mouth as well. He had always wanted her to go down on him but never said it out loud. He had longed for her to take him into her mouth and show him what she could do for a long time but never pushed the issue. Her lips were so juicy he had often fantasized about her using them on his throbbing cock that ached for her every day. Now he would finally get his wish.

He nodded and stood up watching her pat the bed while rising up herself. She was asking him to lay down for her in the spot where she once was.

She smiled sweetly when he did, and as he looked at her amazing mouth a shiver ran down his spine in preperation for feeling it on him where he had wanted to for months.

He sat down on the edge and then laid halfway on his back propping himself up with his elbows behind him. He would let her do whatever she desired with him tonight. It was her call and at her pace. Her heart raced with happiness that he would finally allow her to. He had only been holding back before out of concern on whether or not she could handle it since he was long and thick and he didn't want her to have trouble with his size.

Getting down on her knees in front of him, she looked up at him with such a sweet expression and her soft smile of adoration for him. Her green eyes were sparkling just for him. His blue ones looking grey and staring back at her in the darkness of her room barely lit up by moonlight.

He sat patiently on the edge of her bed, his strong legs open wide giving her full access to his erect member. She had taken it in her hands and stroked him expertly. Her soft hands making him groan loudly and buck into her touch several times. He was going crazy



waiting for it.

She watched as his throbbing heat extended deliciously out of pure pleasure of what she was doing to him and after a few seconds of looking she was teasing the underside of his tip with her fingers. He was patient as he allowed her to explore his length and tip with her hands and fingers.

Then out of nowhere, she took him by surprise by putting her lips to him with her warm wet tongue licking slowly along his length, her breath panting against his skin adding to the sensation. He felt everything she was doing in the darkness as he felt her lips graze all over him sneaking her tongue out from time to time to taste.

"Oh God... Mandy... that feels amazing." He growled out feeling her tease and tickle him.

She smiled and then moved to put him wholly into her wet warm mouth. Her lips and jaw stretching to accomodate his size allowing him to slide past them, inch by agonizing inch. He tilted his head back and growled out a deep moan. He was panting and saying her name in the most savage tone of pleasure she had ever before heard come from him.

She had never before witnessed him make such noises in all their time together doing other things that didn't even compare to this. It was animalistic and absolutely primal. His loud moans made her so wet for him and her stomach knotted up in that familiar feeling of pleasure mixed with a hot searing stab accompanying it.

She could only guess that even if she had no previous experience, she must have read a crap ton of good and filthy descriptive romance novels to her advantage, because she was pulling out all the stops on him she had ever learned through her books and he was loving every minute. He couldn't get enough of her mouth on him and his body was trembling as she sucked him slowly, teasing him by licking his head and then kissing it.

Each time she brought him back into her warm beautiful mouth, he went wild and grabbed her hair gently at the ends on both sides of her face with both hands, ever so lightly tugging her down onto him

and gently thrusting himself up into her tender mouth.

Her lips were soft and well cushioned which was perfect for wrapping around his shaft, and her dangerous thirsty tongue was darting all over his tip while he was inside her mouth. Licking and nibbling, teasing and moaning, she sucked him off expertly as he filled her there.

"Fuck!... Mandy, your mouth is fucking amazing. Don't stop... baby, don't ever stop!" He whimpered and wriggled his hips as he gently bucked into her. He was enjoying the feel of her vibrating mouth sliding along his length whenever she moaned against his tender flesh.

Her throat relaxed a bit more and she was finally able to take him in deep enough that he could feel almost all of his length, near eight inches of him, being massaged by her throat. She almost went all the way to his base then slid back up again, sucking him faster and faster. Sometimes pausing taking little breaks to tease him and make him cry for more.

He looked down at her and admired how pretty she looked whenever she looked up at him with those big green eyes, her oceans of lust crashing around drowning him in them and matching and mirroring perfectly his own blue ones as he watched her.

Her plump lips coaxed him close to the edge as she bobbed her head slower again, pacing herself, and then faster and faster the more confident she became at the sounds he was making. He felt it coming close. His body went rigid and he stopped bucking his hips up to meet her mouth and froze. She stopped and regrettably took her mouth off of him to look at his face, checking to see if he was okay.

"Mandy... I'm gonna... no. Stop. Not like this." He had breathlessly whispered to her pulling away from her warm skillful mouth and hands and sliding away gently, his shaft covered in her saliva and a thin coating of his pre cum. He was still hard and it wasn't going away any time soon.

"I don't want to cum there. You know where I want to put it. Baby, you know..."

His words made her blush and the fire in her belly raged on.

She knew. How could she not? It had been on both their minds since the first time they made love at Lover's Lake.

She stood up from the plush carpet and slowly untied the silken belt of her equally soft silky black robe. He sat there, eyes wide, motionless and watching her intently as it slid off of her shoulders and down her body until it landed in a silken puddle on the floor at her feet and ankles.

Her entire body bared to him, all of her curves on display for his eyes only, he remained hard before her and looked up at her in wonder. If he wasn't stiff prior to this, he was definitely even more erect standing at attention for her now.

He gasped taking in the beauty of her pale soft looking body, from her sweet face to her long soft neck, her perfect breasts, and down her hourglass figure of her stomach and hips. He trailed it even lower to the patch of soft down that was at the apex of her things and took in her long curvy shapely legs.

Moonlight was streaming through her window lighting up all the best parts of her that he was feasting his eyes on. His mouth open in a small O shape as he watched her move slowly towards him and stand over him between his knees.

He leaned forward into her pressing his face and lips to her soft warm stomach passionately trailing fiery hot hungry kisses along it. He looked up into her eyes as her soft long raven hair fell all around her face and shoulders reaching down to tickle his own with its sheer length and he tangled his hands into it trying to pull her to him. His smile was wicked and gentle all in one as he watched her stand there making him wait.

Wrapping his arms around her tightly holding onto her he slid his hands around past her hips and to her round heart shaped ass cupping it. Squeezing it. He was needing it slowly with his hands like soft bakers dough enjoying the feel of his fingertips digging into it and then he pulled his hand back and smacked her cheek with a resounding slap.

Leaving his handprint as a mark on her she moaned loudly and hissed through her teeth taking in air between them in surprise. She sighed at him as she could feel him press his face into her mound once more gripping her hips with his large strong hands. He left kisses there too.

"Mandy... please let me be inside of you. I've waited for so long now. I don't know how much longer I can wait."

His words were hungry and full of need and yet gentle and loving. A stab of lust and pent up need shot through her when he said this. She felt it too. He almost gasped when she pushed him gently back onto her bed making him lay himself out for her from head to toe.

Climbing forward on the bed, her breasts soft and gravity making them look so perfect, she crawled over him as he lay there on his back. His eyes went wide when her soft supple breasts pushed forward into his face, nestling it there between them safe in her cleavage. She breathed slow and stayed like that for a moment enjoying his moans as his hands and mouth explored her tits and her hard little nipples.

Pushing his face and hands away he groaned but then she climbed on top of him. The heat of her thighs and her crotch warming his groin and his own thighs. He growled for her to stop teasing.

"Don't tease me, Mandy, fuck I want you so bad!"

She spread her legs and straddling herself on top of him, she mounted him gently while holding herself open below with her long gentle fingers wanting him to push himself into her at his own pace. She trembled but he sensed she was not afraid.

He was losing it while he moved slowly, about to guide himself inside of her slick warm folds, holding himself with one hand. Instead of dipping into her he slid his length between her lips making himself nice and wet with her. She moaned his name there in the darkness asking, begging, for him to put it where he wanted it the most.

He was taking his sweet time enjoying it while seeking her heated core with the tip, teasing her with it at her tight warm opening. At one point he rubbed and pinched her clit with his hand making her

cry out and start to get angry with her need for him. He laughed in the dark and told her to be patient which made her sigh and whimper.

She was dripping with need for him and it would be so easy to glide into her. He felt Mandy attempt to grind herself down onto his tip but he held her hips in place not letting her move taking full control of her. She had teased him for so long now he felt it only appropriate to return the favor. His grin was wicked and his eyes feral as he watched her beg for it repeatedly and talking dirty to him trying to get him to fold.

Lightly pushing his tip near the beginning of her entrance, slow and steady, then pulling back some only to press himself against her again, he was messing with her. She tilted her head back and gasped at the feel of him barely pushing past it only to withdraw several times, her clit throbbing and aching for release above him.

He was panting hotly, pressing his face and mouth between her breasts and whispering her name back to her between them with a mixture of his own brand of dirty talk. Mouthing hot obscenities getting her worked up with his words, as he laid back gripping her hips getting ready to plunge into her. How badly he wanted to hilt her completely with every inch of his length and impale her inside slowly, ever so slowly.

Finally, just as he was about to release his grip on her smooth warm thighs and allow her to sink down onto him to push himself all the way up inside...

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...

Mandy woke up.

## **24. Modus Operandi - The Cycle Repeats**

**BAD BOY GONE GOOD - A STRANGER THINGS BILLY + FEMALE OC MIXED FANFIC**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to all those who faved, read, reviewed, and supported me to continue. Without you this fic wouldn't still be going. I appreciate it. :D

I do not own Stranger Things, Billy, or any original character from the show. This fic is purely for entertainment and is making no money and is completely free. The Duffer Brothers own everything and a big thank you to them for inspiring this. :D

Enjoy.

**-BAD BOY GONE GOOD-**

### **MODUS OPERANDI - THE CYCLE REPEATS**

#### **Summary:**

Someone evil and twisted beyond all possible thought is once more stalking the streets of Hawkins, Indiana, picking up where they left off for the new year. An unidentified never before caught methodical monster masquerading as a normal person that had claimed the lives and the bodies of young teenage girls of a very specific type and preference now on the loose once more.

Hawkins is no longer safe. A new cycle of terror begins...

As news reports come rolling in, and with the Mayor breathing down his neck, Hopper must act fast with his team to try and get to the bottom of this and solve the long buried cold case once and for all. Time is of the essence and leads are not promising or abundant. He will have to take several people in for questioning and attempt to uncover the truth that had long evaded him over

the years.

The community mourns and curfews are once more put in place as a precaution. Whispers of the return of said evil and vile acts as well as about the mysterious one responsible for them are spoken about in hushed whispers just about everywhere. The people of Hawkins are on high alert and the Hawkins P.D. must struggle to capture this psychotic criminal at all costs.

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Victoria Fitzgerald, a beautiful Irish born fair skinned girl with brilliant fiery red hair and lovely green eyes full of life, was saying goodbye to her friends at the Starcourt Mall. They had no idea they would be the last ones to see her alive and well.

It was still early in the day, about five in the evening on a chilly mid November, and getting dark faster and faster as the Winter months now left very little precious daylight. The sun was sinking low in the horizon around the usual time teenagers were so used to hanging out with their friends in public places still having carefree fun.

Shops were closing at their regular times despite the sun setting sooner than it normally did, keeping their strict traditional hours of operation that their loyal customers knew well over the years.

The result was that patrons that were families and students alike would be leaving parking lots and shopping centers long after the sun had set. Some lots were more well lit up than others as more of a safety precaution than an actual fear of dangerous people or groups in the darkness that fell.

One such patron and teenager had been Victoria, who decided to enjoy a night time walk to another friend's house instead of catching a ride home with her other ones she had just parted with.

Hawkins was a safe town where not many eventful or unforgettable things happened. Almost like a black hole in which everything either sunk into it to be swallowed up or actively avoided it's gravitational pull entirely going around it.

The worst thing to fear around this time were extreme cold weather events, especially during the end of Thanksgiving and Christmas time. Snowstorms, blizzards, hail and rain were common but easily dealt with thanks to salt trucks, snow plows, and tools all residents owned in preparation for it.

As for crime or such related atrocities, It had been well over a year without incident and so in this dreamlike almost sedated state of comfort and reliability, not many people were afraid of anything. Doors could be kept virtually unlocked. Homes undisturbed from burglarization. Shops not really being shoplifted and even the gas station workers felt at ease.

The long lost painful memories of the fear and tragedy from former years far behind them in the calm and peaceful illusion that all was right in the world, and in Hawkins, as it should be.

But tonight was the night that illusion would be shattered. Tonight was the night people would no longer peacefully assemble or feel safe huddled together in their own homes. They would not be quelled each time they went to work, to school, to shop. They would no longer be able to look on their neighbors or random passersby without ingrained suspicion or a deep seeded fear.

Tonight the dark and gutwrenching deeds of the most heinous, not to mention one and only, serial killer of Hawkins would begin anew. The cycle would repeat itself just as before. For tonight he or she would take another life. Another victim. Another sacrifice from the town many called home and felt protected in.

As Victoria made her way along the pavement passing under streetlights and humming to herself she felt at ease until she came to her usual trusty shortcut along her way. It was a familiar one she had used many times before without any fear or worries.

Treading through the quiet alleyway, that was not very well lit like the main streets of Hawkins had been in the shopping districts and downtown areas, she paced herself calmly and happily without a care in the world thinking back on the cheerful events of earlier with her group of similarly outcast close friends.



The chilly night air made her shudder a bit as she bundled up in her thick gawdy winter coat as she began blowing hot air from her mouth to warm her hands. She could see her breath and admired the Christmas lights and decorations in the far distance people in the neighborhood had already put up in anticipation of the magical holiday.

The only sounds were the clacking of her heels echoing on the concrete as she carried on traveling to her final destination. The night was closing in on her as the sun had disappeared below the horizon more than an hour ago, letting a chorus of crickets and cicadas sing into the cold chilly atmosphere all around her.

Tonight, unlike all the other nights, for some strange reason a sudden uneasy feeling came over her while walking the well worn path she had for so many years prior. Tonight it felt different. Strange. Dangerous even. It felt wrong to be here and her blood was feeling cold in her veins chilling her to the very bone as she looked around at her barely visible surroundings. There was just enough light from distant houses and buildings but not enough to see as well as she would like to.

She paused and looked behind her as if she had heard a sound. Another pair of footsteps? Following her? On a peaceful and quiet night like tonight? And why here? Why now?

Shaking her head chalking it up to her imagination she turned back around to continue and laughing at herself for being so paranoid. No one was around where she was and they certainly wouldn't be trailing her.

Hawkins was safe there was nothing to fear in this sleepy little town. The worst that happened here were traffic accidents and long time feuds from the farmers and other old folk who had lived here for many years. Maybe a few brawls between students but never anything serious.

Pulling her coat closer about her neck and shoulders she could not shake the feeling that somewhere in the dark of the night she was being watched. The more she tried to push it out of her mind the more the feeling grew. Turning around once more the sounds of

secondary footsteps behind her stopped again.

"Hello?" She called out into the darkness behind her.

"Is anyone there? You can stop following me, I'm warning you. I have pepper spray and I'm not afraid to use it!"

It was a bluff. A poor one. She carried no spray, no knife, no deterring weapon of any kind in her purse or in her pockets but she had to say something along those lines so whoever it was would leave her be and think twice about trying anything in the inky blackness of the now distorted and terrifying alley.

"Stay away from me or you'll get an eyeful of it. I'm not fucking joking, whoever you are!"

Her threat almost sounded hollow with how her voice trembled with fear as soon as her words left her somewhat cold lips. It even sounded pathetic even to her own ears.

"My dad's a cop! You better quit while you still can! He will find you, trust me!" Her voice was shrill and desperate. She made up anything she could to strike fear into the one following her as best as she could.

She had hoped whoever was tailing her hadn't picked up on her uncertainty and grew emboldened by it to do whatever it was they might be planning to do. Even more so, she hoped there was no one else truly following her and that it was all just in her mind. Just a fearful overworked imagination getting the better of her.

Perhaps it had been the clattering of a car in the distance or the pattering of an animal. But she highly doubted that. She knew what a person's footsteps sounded like. She was almost certain there was someone else out here with her.

"Quit fucking around! This isn't funny! Trisha? Claire? Ryan is that you? Stop, please, this is so childish even for any one of you!"

"Assholes. I can't believe this..." she muttered under her breath laughing irritably and getting annoyed at the childish games they liked to play with her sometimes. When the silence of no response hit

her and sunk in her eyes went wide and she began to be afraid again.

No one answered. No friends jumped out to claim their prank. Her heart almost stopped at the realization that this wasn't a joke being played on her by one of her classmates.

Finally, when it stayed quiet, she moaned in distress still feeling something wasn't quite right and not giving up on listening for any other sounds of movement or a prowler still hot on her trail. Her senses were heightened with the need for survival and she turned beginning to walk faster, as fast as her heels would let her anyway, trying to make it past the alleyway. She would stop to remove her heels but they were strapped on and to stop was to slow down increasing her risk of something horrible happening to her if she was correct in her assumption and assessment of her perilous situation.

Just on the other side was her freedom. Just on the other side would be the opening of the tightly enclosed alley that lead to the street of her friend Becky's house. If she could just make the distance and into the street lights she would be safe running up to the door and being let inside where it was warm and safe with whoever it was out here far behind her and unable to follow. If she could just get to the end all would be well. She rationalized this in her mind somehow convincing herself that it was perfectly reasonable.

Victoria cursed herself for having nothing to fight off an attacker with. Her parents had always told her to stay in the street lights and to carry a self defense weapon but she never took them seriously. Until now.

Her pace quickened, her heart pounding in her chest nearly in her throat, and Victoria briskly continued but within a few moments she once more heard the heavy footsteps even closer behind her than before. Almost whimpering with fear but not giving up she pressed on with great haste knowing that to stop or slow down could mean the difference between life and death.

Behind her the person hot on her trail began to break into a sudden heavy and loud run and before she could turn around or scream, they had grabbed her with powerful arms and clamped a strange smelling rag over her face.

"Shhhhhh..." Was all she heard in her ear as within seconds she blacked out knowing nothing.

Her limp fainting body being held up by a stronger one and she didn't even get a chance to have a good look at the face of the perpetrator before passing out completely, her eyeballs rolling in the back of her head from whatever it was they used to drug her.

Her last thought was of her family and her friends. As things went black for her she thought of how close she had been to the warm safe house before being caught by the one that would now take her, perhaps never to be seen or to breathe ever again.

The stranger picked her up over their shoulder and carried her off into the night quickly in case someone had heard her yelling.

Quick, quiet, efficient, and calculating, the abductor loaded her into the trunk of the car parked behind the bushes not too far from the alley where it was nestled in secrecy so prying eyes would not find it.

Every inch a clever one, they chose the alleyway and their victim ahead of time, having scoped this location as well as tracking her walking habits. They had been planning it out methodically before striking because they knew a person of habit is a target never hard to find or to victimize.

.....

Jim Hopper was a man of few words in the morning. He loved his smokes. He loved his coffee. And he deeply loved his adopted daughter, El, now officially known as Jane Hopper, whom he had taken in when he found her in the woods near the Byer's residence a year or so ago.

She was cold and half starved despite having food in a stored location nearby. It wasn't enough to properly sustain her although she had managed to survive on it. It was a wonder she had even lasted out there and he had no idea where she came from to begin with. Whoever her original family had been, it was clear she had not been raised by a proper one or knowing social human interaction skills and proper etiquette for being out in the world.

She was a mystery to him but he had a soft spot for troubled kids in need ever since he lost his own daughter years ago to the ugly battle that was cancer. It had ripped apart his family and his marriage, his wife eventually leaving him. It left a huge hole in his bleeding heart and lucky for him, El had come along helping to fill some of that gaping wound.

In many ways she reminded him of his deceased child so he had taken her in and went through all the channels needed to adopt her officially and legally. She gained her own new birth certificate bearing his last name and discovering her first true name through records not easily dug up. She slowly adjusted to knowing her real first name and having her adopted new last name to give her a sense of identity never before known.

Over the past year she actually preferred being called Jane now instead of the former, but her close friends still called her El as that is how they knew her having been almost the first to discover her from the beginning. They had found her long before he had been on the scene but not before his good friend Benny Hammond who ran the diner downtown famously known as Benny's Burgers.

Still, Hopper wound up being the one she had trusted most to take care of her being able to teach her, support her, and give her a more permanent stable home. It took every ounce of trust on his part in accepting her safety considering all she had been through to even be able to let go of her on her first day of school. He was a nervous wreck that day worried sick about her and how her first day would go. He worried if she would be bullied or make friends. If she would fit in or be unhappy. She was a good kid with a heart of gold but she could give him sass and attitude every once in a while, especially when it came to not wanting to mind the house rules they agreed to together.

He loved her dearly and all her growing pains of puberty she came with. But what he didn't love was her eating through their entire stash of Eggos in one morning and spoiling her breakfast lunch and dinner with them often. Despite his many talks with her about this, she was addicted to the damn things, and thanks to her youthful metabolism, didn't gain much in weight from inhaling them. A thing he was somewhat jealous of considering his bulky build and trying to

cut down a few sizes and lose weight himself.

Oh, to be young again and able to run and play and move fast like the wind keeping in shape. Flo had gotten on him about this numerous times always replacing his donuts he tried to eat at the station with health foods in a sneaky switcheroo when he was looking, much to his displeasure.

The noisy coffee pot was going in the background sounding like it was struggling to function, brewing his morning cup of 'wake the hell up go juice'. He was grumbling while looking into the freezer digging for any signs of even ONE of the familiar boxes of special brand breakfast flapjacks finding none. Not even so much as an empty container of evidence for her infraction.

"Jane! What have I told you about the rules? You need a healthy balanced breakfast, you can't just pig out on the Eggos and eat the entire supply!"

He growled this out but not in a vicious way, barely even awake yet, rubbing his tired eyes and looking around for the first time seeing at least two or three of the empty boxes littered on the cabin floor where their dining room met the living room. Jane was in her room with the sounds of the television going. He had extended the cord for her so she could watch her favorite cartoons in the morning in the comfort of her own safe space.

Her room was a space he respected and he didn't barge in but always knocked. However, he could still hollar for her to come out if he needed to have a serious talk with her about things and normally she would listen. It was still taking time for her to adjust to the normalcy of having a father figure in her life who cared for her and he had taken great strides with her. Their relationship could still be rather strained as she didn't always like to follow the rules he set down in the household.

"On top of it all, you're a slob, too. You need to at least pick up the evidence if you don't want to be busted at the scene of the crime."

He picked up the Eggo boxes making a cop joke with her about what she had done but still he was quite irrate at the fact that she not only

ate all of them but even left the garbage behind. Shoving all but one into the trash can he held onto one to use to confront her with.

"Come out here, young lady. Turn off the cartoons and join me in the kitchen. That's not a request."

She had peeked her head out between the crack of her door, the flashing and noisy television not stopping yet, as she barely opened it wider and gave him an innocent look pretending as if she had no idea what he was talking about. He looked right at her and saw right through it. She bowed her head in defeat knowing she would have to come over.

"Now. Table. Discussion."

He said while standing near the dining table lit up by a hanging lamp above it with a soft glow. It was still early morning and the sun hadn't risen to its full splendor and brightness just yet. As he sat there waiting he was tapping the empty Eggo box the cheap yet practical table.

She sighed but was compliant and switched off the T.V. set then slowly walked over to join him with a somewhat irritated look of her own covering her soft young face. She had heard this talk so many times she already knew the drill but she humored him and tried to wipe the look off her face to be civil and receptive.

Taking his seat at the table he picked up the empty Eggo container he set down and he waved it at her sarcastically but was still maintaining a more lenient face as much as he could muster in his harsh disappointment of her. As she watched him move the box around a few times from side to side she knew he was doing it to make her face her little indiscretion and she tried to suppress a slow grin at him. No matter how many times he talked about this one rule he always let her off the hook about it knowing how much she loved her beloved Eggos.

She still tried hard to keep a serious and clueless face, her thin small frame dressed in denim overalls and a striped long sleeve shirt, and her curly dark hair finally growing out to frame her gentle impish but sweet features. Sitting across from him in the hot seat he finally

stopped moving the item and placed the empty box on the table folding his thick but strong arms over his chest. He grunted softly, his bearded face stern and his thick dark mustache and eyebrows set in a stoney look.

"I know we had this talk not too long ago. Remember? It comes up often. What have you to say for yourself, then, hmm?"

He tried to give her a stern face but she looked so sweetly at him he almost couldn't stay serious or mad at her despite his efforts.

"I'm sorry. I'll try harder. Promise."

He saw her rather fake look of guilt for a moment but then she smiled across the table at him and he couldn't help the slow one that curled up at the corners of own mouth. It slightly lifted his mustache in the process no longer able to keep a stoic parental look at her. He reached over and ruffled her curly hair chuckling deeply.

"Alright. You keep trying, kid. Just take it easy on them if you can help it, okay? I may have an awesome job as a police chief but that doesn't mean I'm made of money or want to keep dishing out more than I need to in order to keep buying so many of those things for you. With you cleaning me out as it is with the swear jar you should be able to afford your own soon anyway. They are a treat so make em last, yeah? All junk food in moderation."

She nodded and smiled softly at him and simply sat there enjoying his company.

"Moderation." She repeated slowly back to him careful on the pronunciation and trying to get it right. He was teaching her new words everyday and this one he especially wanted her to learn.

"Moderation. Mod. Er. Ay. Shun. It means taking things in small amounts and not overdoing it."

She knew he had his own addictions to junk foods but she didn't hold it against him. He looked at her putting his own hands on his rather rotund belly as if he was full just from knowing she had eaten so many of them and didn't seem slowed down at all. If he had



consumed as much donuts as she did Eggos he would be put in the hospital with a severe tummy ache for sure.

"Well, I suppose you're too full for a proper breakfast, huh? That's too bad. I had planned strawberry pancake surprise with whipped cream this morning and a side of some eggs and bacon... buuuuuut."

He drew that last word out.

"If you're too full then I guess I'm on my own to partake." He said trying his best to look sad and sighing with a frown to make her see the ramifications of her small defiance.

El patted her stomach, unperturbed in the slightest, as if to show him physically he was correct in his statement.

"Yup. I'm full. Thanks, papa."

She had said it so lightly and happily he couldn't be too disappointed. And the way she said it completely won him over. He nodded to her beaming with pride at her finally warming up to calling him that.

Looking at how thin she was he wondered where she packed it all away in that tiny body of hers. Before he could guess the answer the sound of his coffee machine behind him was hissing and gurgling and when he looked at it he saw it overflowing on the counter looking as if it was having a heart attack. Not even having the time now to get to make that breakfast, he gasped at the fact that already trouble was brewing to prevent that. Literally.

"Shit! I mean, shoot. Sorry. Damn - dangit! Those don't count!"

He half shouted pointing at her as he leapt to his feet rather unconvincingly and ran from the table to the counter, almost hitting his head on the swinging lamp that hung above it as he did so. It provoked him to being just seconds away from cursing again. But he stopped himself in time from swearing as he rushed over to try and prevent the eventual disaster from the ancient piece of junk he called a coffee maker.

"That's two. The swear jar. Rules are rules." El smirked counting up the cuss words lifting one eyebrow knowing he sometimes broke a

few of them too.

As Hopper danced helplessly around in the kitchen unsure of what to do but watching his bare feet while also trying not to burn himself on his hands he panicked. She was having a soft fit of laughter at the table watching him while cupping her mouth. This only made him grumble even more grouchy than before about it.

He was grabbing dish towels to try and mop up the dark wet liquid that was going everywhere and tried to keep up the pace of soaking up the mess it was making with them but it was almost impossible. It just kept leaking and gushing dark hot fluids mixed with burnt dry coffee grounds.

Finally making a last ditch effort to stifle the overflow he resorted to a makeshift tying of an entire towel around the machine itself. His failed attempts at trying to plug it up while frustrated at the utter wreck that was now his kitchen floor and countertop, he realized too late that he needed to power it off to do damage control or the spills would just keep happening.

Once he succeeded in shutting down the berzerk coffee machine by unplugging it giving up completely on the busted off switch, the coffee maker gave one last gurgle and hiss as it died down slowly. He sighed in relief when he saw it stopped spilling everywhere and he had managed to get everything under control. He almost chucked the dang thing, half filtered wet and dry coffee grounds and all, into the trash bin angrily.

"Cheap plastic, made in China, piece of cr- junk!" She grinned and he made a sheepish face but folded his arms again at how amused she was at his blunders.

He caught himself that time as El watched him with a knowing grin and Hopper noting it almost brought the count to three. Three whole dollars for his lack of self control over his mouth when pushed to his limits. She was most likely having a great time watching him self destruct as usual. Always the happy lighthearted child finding humor in everything even in times when things went horribly wrong. It helped keep him balanced out and prevent his anger at little things going overboard teaching him to laugh at himself more often.

"Blast it! Oh well, I'll just have to either pick a cup up on the way to work, being even more late than I already am, or get some at the office today."

His stomach soured at the thought and he grimaced. Flo's coffee tasted like it came from the bottom of one of their local riverbeds or the Quarry itself. The tar she served him was enough to have him sitting on the toilet for hours a day or so after ingesting it. The grossed out look on his face earned a small giggle from El as he grabbed the mop and got to work quickly wiping up as much of the spill as he could.

"I'm going to be late. Again. Flo and the gang aren't gonna be too happy about this. Not like they should expect anything different from me but... yeah. Wonderful."

When he was done and turned around to face her, El pointed to the swear jar not letting him distract her from it and grinned at him slyly. He frowned but nodded understanding that he too had to abide by the house rules and reached into the pocket of his current worn work pants but couldn't find his wallet.

"Yeah, yeah. Rules are rules. I get it."

Patting his pockets not feeling the thickness of his wallet, he went to check if they were in his dirty work pants slung over the couch and shouted triumphantly while digging into the pockets finding both his missing wallet and his car keys there. He grinned tossing the offending and now empty dirty items into the laundry hamper making a decent long distance shot. He wouldn't be making the mistake of washing them again, that had been a total disaster and days of phone calls to replace everything that got hopelessly wet and destroyed.

Opening his black leather wallet and stashing two bucks into his designated jar for his two heated mistakes earlier he noticed the one with his name on it was overflowing and hers was practically empty in comparison. He decided to put his recovered wallet in his work jacket and clipping his keys onto his belt loop as he had a bad habit of misplacing them or leaving them somewhere he shouldn't. He often made these kinds of mistakes before or during rushing to get

out the door or when completing other tasks.

"Listen, I gotta get going so gather your stuff fast. We have to drop you off to school before you're late too. I'll just make it up to you later, okay? Dinner. You and me at Benny's Burgers this evening. Diner fries, a couple of beef patties grilled to perfection, and the best dang shakes in town! Sound good? Deal? I haven't seen ol' Benny in ages so that would be a good chance for us to catch up. Haha, ketchup!"

He made an eager to please face with his hands out when he said "catch up" really meaning a play on words for the kitchen condiment while talking about a burger and fries joint.

He offered this compromise hoping it would be good enough. He always liked to treat her out and let her be a kid, something he felt she had been denied of for far too long in her life before falling into his.

"Yeah. Deal!"

She reached out and shook with him on it and he returned the gesture happy they could solve their differences easily this time. He would let the Eggo issue slide for now as long as she respected the other major rules, which she had so far.

"Okay, excellent."

He said smiling while being temporarily distracted from thinking about his earlier search and success of finding his two most important assets and relocating them. He wondered how he got things so messed up sometimes. Maybe he was getting old and senility was kicking in early.

Hopper turned to her as he realized too late she hadn't mentioned anything about his small joke he made about the the ketchup. So apparently she would laugh at his misfortunes but not his one shot jokes. Figures.

"Really? No comment? Not even a laugh or a 'you're so lame, pops' insult at my best joke yet?" He asked while standing there waiting for

her to say something while smirking at her.

He had been trying to get her to laugh on purpose instead of by accident but saw it wasn't as effective as he thought it would be. She caught the joke but groaned and rolled her eyes at his semi lame sense of humor.

"Well, I thought it was funny. Okay, chop, chop! Let's go!"

He shook his head chuckling at his own genius despite her unimpressed reponse to it.

El nodded knowing her own routine being very fast at it and got up to collect her things and to put on her Winter clothes to stay warm or Hopper would have a worry fit over her getting sick. Running into her room to get them from her closet and dresser she put on her gloves, her earmuffs, and her warm fuzzy jacket. Grabbing her backpack she nodded to him letting him know she was ready to leave then headed out to his police cruiser to wait for him also knowing he would take longer to get ready as was his usual habit.

He thought about Benny as he worked on collecting the rest of his clean work clothes all in one spot on the couch. His thoughts tended to wander a lot making him misplace things easily enough and forgetting where they were strewn about when the time came that he needed them.

He and Benny had been best friends in high school together when he was younger along with Joyce Byers. They went way back and it had been Benny Hammond that had made the first call in to him about El when she came into his diner that fateful day. The good man that he was, he fed her and tried to keep an eye on her, asked her a few questions learning of her strange nickname, and then called it in to Hopper's station while watching her as best as he could until he could arrive.

Before he could get to the diner, when Benny was distracted with customers, she had taken off and disappeared again giving them all the slip. She had most likely heard his phone call to the police and decided to bail. He had given a detailed description of her but it was still hard to find her even if they had top of the line sketch artist

pictures to show them who they were looking for and how to recognize her. Benny had initially thought she was a boy because of the short buzzed hair but it had turned out she was female.

Hopper spent months searching for her and found out eventually that she had been under his nose the entire time staying with Mike Wheeler in his basement off and on. His parents were very much in the dark and unaware of it. Mike had taken her in first and they formed a bond, the two inseparable. But when he showed up asking about her Mike was tight lipped not willing to tell anything and since he came around asking, El had fled off into the woods not wanting to be caught almost like a wild animal.

He explained it to the overprotective kid that he needed to find the girl because only he could help her find a more stable home and make sure she would be safe and well cared for, despite him not wanting to hear it.

Mike eventually told him about Mirkwood that surrounded the Byer's residence and the area near Will's hideout known as "Fort Byer's". He said that she was hiding out there and scavenging for herself from time to time until Will could periodically check on her bringing her food and supplies and reporting back to him and the rest of their friends on her status. This was how she had come to love her beloved Eggos.

Hopper warned Mike furiously and tactfully that the cold season was coming and he made him become painfully aware that if she stayed out there like that she wouldn't survive it and could get sick or die or wind up in the hospital. He eventually lead him to the infamous fort with the rest of the boys to comfort her in a safe environment filled with her friends. He had been the one to gently coax El to come out and listen to Hopper asking her, begging her, to come along and not run off.

At first El had been angry about Mike and their mutual friends telling of her location and handing her over, but she eventually forgave him, and warmed up to Hopper as well letting him watch over her becoming her official guardian.

When he put her into Hawkins Middle School he knew Mike and the

group would take good care of her keeping an eye on her for him when he had to work. It was a great symbiotic plan that worked out perfectly for all of them. Mike and his friends got to spend time with El, his precious irreplaceable Jane, in school and he in turn would let them all hangout on the weekends as long as they were in the group keeping an eye on each other.

Even in all this he still was set on imposing a fair curfew for her around eight at night, even earlier in Winter time now since the sun set faster. She would come home on time each night riding bikes with the boys, usually on the back of Mike's, and they would see her safely to the cabin to drop her off before going home themselves.

Then the two of them would spend their evenings together watching Miami Vice, their favorite show, and eating popcorn, chips, and other snacks. She would keep him updated and would talk about her school days and her weekends going out with her friends. It was a perfect life and he was happy to share it with her, not feeling so lonely anymore like he had been without her.

He helped her with her school work and was helping her speak English a little better and more fluently. Whoever had her before in their custody didn't teach her much and must not have had her in school to learn things she needed to know to survive in the real world. But even in all of this, she was strong, a beautiful person inside and out. He trusted her. It was the outside world with her he didn't trust.

Hopper brought himself back to the present and noticed she was gone and had already made her way outside to his car. Seeing El left the cabin already ready to go, hopper rushed as always doing everything last minute often believing time was the enemy and hindered people from enjoying the little things in life.

Jim fumbled with his comb while looking in the mirror to fix his hair, speedily brushed his teeth and used mouthwash, then hurried to finish dressing himself. He took off the old stained undershirt and replaced it with a fresh one. Putting on his socks and his standard issue heavy work boots built for snow and slushy terrain, he sighed about his day and the ruined coffee maker catastrophe.

He quickly threw his Hawkins P.D. uniform button up shirt over his undershirt and completed the look by pinning his Hawkins Chief badge onto it so fast he slightly stabbed himself with the pin on accident. He grumbled and let out a short line of obscenities at the brief moment of pain looking around out of habit of not wanting to be heard but remembering she was outside.

Grabbing his hat last like he always did from the coat rack where it rested, thankfully, he put it on adjusting it to his liking. He had almost walked out the door without his jacket in his haste to leave but the biting cold reminded him before he got too far out.

Cursing once more hoping Jane didn't hear him, he went back inside to snatch his thick dark blue coat that was left lying on the couch instead of the rack where it should have been.

"That's three!"

El shouted gleefully with a smartass tone from outside while leaning against his cruiser and he had to laugh because she missed the ones prior to it that he had let slip inside of the cabin. Technically it was a lot more than that, but he wouldn't let her know that. He would pay up the dollar he owed later adding to her piggy bank disguised as his own punishment jar for being unable to control his mouth more often than he cared to admit.

Hopper took a moment to reflect about his freeform colorful language and how it could quite possibly make him go broke emptying out his entire wallet in no time flat to the swear jar padding her pockets quite nicely for a weekend out with her friends.

The curse tax he paid regularly often became her allowance and yet hers never filled up for his much needed Eggo fund, but he didn't mind so much. She was a good wholesome kid that at least attempted to stay out of trouble. It was usually Mike and his friends that were somewhat the temptation laden influence on her but still he trusted them and she had always come home without a scrape on her.

Hopper dug into his Hawkins P.D. official jacket that proudly displayed all his official patches one last time he confirmed his wallet was still there much to his instant relief. Another relieving thing was



that his thick coat was warm for the current weather and was pleased to see El had bundled up properly too.

Shrugging on the thick blue jacket he was glad it was where he left it since sometimes he left it absentmindedly always in his other pair of work or casual pants by mistake. He was not wanting to forget it only to have to drive all the way back just to pick it up. He secured his pockets, another cause of him losing things, as he rushed outside and locked up the cabin.

Making his way to his truck as fast as he could he unlocked it letting them both inside to turn on the heat for them along with some music he knew they both loved to listen to while riding together. He smiled at her rubbing his hands together and saw her cocky look with her hand held out for his due payment. He looked at her incredulously but saw she insisted still grinning from ear to ear.

"I'll get you the dollar later. Ready? All aboard the crazy train, girly, because I'm clearly the conductor today! Let's get this show on the road!"

The Chief, her cool new dad, honked the cruiser's loud horn a few times playfully and even flashed his lights for her for a bit before taking off.

She grinned and leaned back in the seat happy to finally feel like she belonged and had someone to actually call family. She was also excited to see her friends at school too, most importantly Mike, as her friends were a part of her family now too.

Jim and Jane laughed and joked together most of the way there feeling on top of the world and like nothing could bring them down or tear them apart. She was home. And he had rekindled the familiar love of a father for a daughter with her he hadn't felt in a long time.

He knew El wouldn't replace his own beloved daughter who passed, but she was healing his heart all the same of that pain by simply being who she was. A good kid and a great part of his new life.

If not for her, he would have still been drinking too much and would have gone down a very dark path. She was the light that kept him

going and he would always foster that light with all his heart and soul and protect her from anything he possibly could that life could throw at her.

After dropping her off and watching her wave as she met up with her group of friends he smiled at her feeling an intense swelling of pride. Proud at how far she had come and proud of himself for doing such a great job with her. She had friends and wasn't alone anymore. Even if they could be slight troublemakers he felt deep down they were good for her. She was opening up more because of them as well, along with his love and care for her keeping their relationship healthy and transparent in all things.

It did his heart good to see that and he cherished all the time he had with her so far. Sometimes he worried about losing her as she grew older but would stifle those feelings and try not to think so negatively. No matter what she would always be his little girl but his strong Jane.

Once she was inside the school he backed up the cruiser and left heading for the station as fast as he could. Sometimes he would cheat and throw on his siren and lights to cut through traffic or lights but he tried hard not to most days.

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Arriving at the police station he locked up his rather rugged all terrain vehicle and attempted jogging his way through the slushed snow into the building. He was trying to recover and catch his breath as he was greeted by his usual team and the office staff.

Walking over to the familiar shared pink box on one of the counters that was there every morning, he tried to sneak a glazed sugarfilled pastry but as usual Flo caught him replacing it swiftly from his hand with an apple before he could bite into his chosen donut. She put it back in the box and he grunted in displeasure but when she looked at him he sighed and accepted it making her happy.

He looked around and noticed his two closest partners in the room by waving to them while lifting up the apple in his hand. Hopper acknowledge them with a jealous forced smile. They both had their

favorite kind of donut and a cup of coffee which smelled great filling up the whole room evidently not from the station supply.

Officer Powell and Callahan looked amused yet somewhat irritated at his tardiness but still remained professional. They obviously felt it wasn't quite fair he could be late just because he was the Chief. Still they went on about their business.

Him being late wasn't the only thing unfair around here, he thought sort of bitterly looking at the red apple in his hand and watching his fellow officers eat their donuts.

"Hey, Chief." Powell said.

"Mornin', Cheif." Callahan echoed.

They were discussing anything from current events to the coming bad weather while also checking out paperwork and local complaints with the other officers who took most of the calls at the station. Flo was normally reserved to taking calls specifically and directly for Hopper as his personal assistant.

Florence looked at him square in the eyes and he knew exactly what she was thinking. She almost reminded him of his old high school teacher that would always get on him about his attendance.

"Sorry I'm late. I know it's going to sound lame but... uhh... my coffee machine... practically exploded in my cabin. Don't ask. Any important calls for me so far while I was out?"

He asked his rather frumpy but kind elderly secretary while still slightly panting from the earlier run as he walked briskly towards his personal office in the back of the station.

Flo, the large but fit stocky woman trailed behind him. They both walked into his office with Florence shutting the door behind her.

When he got there he took off his jacket hanging it on the equally troublesome coat rack that rested in the far corner of the stuffy room. For Winter weather they kept the station plenty warm but sometimes they seemed to overdo it a bit more than they should. Switching on his small lamp he opened the blinds and his window behind his desk

just a crack to let cooler air in and balance out the warmth from the station heater.

"Nothing too urgent has come through that the other officers couldn't handle. Mostly the smaller stuff so far with no major problems."

She fixed her large granny glasses on her face adjusting them. He sat down in his comfortable chair then nodded looking around for a minute tapping his fingers on his desk. She just stood there silently as if waiting on him to say something.

Looking to him for a few moments she was wondering what he might need of her until he finally caught on and realized she was waiting for him to let her know if he needed anything before she returned to her own desk.

Breaking through his muddled halfway gone thoughts he remembered his lack of caffeine, asking her to bring on the terrible black sludge she called coffee, and requesting urgently for her to double up on the creamer and sugar earning an almost stern motherly look from her.

Jim caught the look she gave him as she placed her hands on her wide hips as if to say to him he might want to rethink that.

"Oh, you think I'm bad? My kid ate three whole boxes of Eggos this morning and I'm the one that's going to get fat. That's... that's cute. Real cute."

Flo looked shocked for a moment at hearing this but still recovered and went back to her knowing look at not wanting him to give up on the diet she was trying to enforce simply to help him get more in shape.

"Chief, she's a child. You're in your forties. If you think I don't know what that adds up to simply because I'm not a nurse or doctor, you can think again because I still know nutrition and how fat cell storage works."

Hopper grunted irritated and rolled his eyes. In his forties and still getting a lecture of his own as if he were a child. She continued to

make it clear to him just how concerned she was. Normally she spoke few words but this time she had a lot she wanted to say about his performance as if she were his boss.

"Last month Eugene told me he noticed you couldn't run very fast when investigating his crops again, for the eleventh time this year may I add? More to the point, you told me about that one specific night that you thought you saw someone in his field and tried to catch up with them but they got away from you while you were winded. Those were your own words. If this isn't proof enough you need to slim down and eat right getting more exercise then I don't know what will convince you, Hop."

Hopper was now tossing the apple from hand to hand looking at it like a small child being scolded by his own parent. He let her continue with her loving chastisement of him, an annoyed but agreeable look on his face while trying hard not to roll his eyes at her. That would just make her continue and press even harder.

He knew she meant well and was only looking out for him. He also knew she made several great points and was telling the truth about his inability to run very far or for very long. He had confessed that to her openly, something he would never do with Powell or Callahan. As much as he had bonded with and trusted them, he knew they would laugh and never let him live it down. Even now they made heavy jokes sometimes between the two of them but not to be facetious, just to tease him a little bit. It was their way of "encouraging" him to lose the pounds.

"Doesn't it bother you that you can't give chase anymore when you need to? And those poor missing girls... a few times last year you had been close to catching a runner from the scene but lost closing in on them."

When he sagged in his chair a bit and stopped messing around with the apple she immediately stopped herself.

"Oh, I'm sorry, Chief, I didn't mean to bring it up like that. I should be more careful when talking about it. I know it's a sensitive subject for all of us, especially you. My apologies."

Even in her lecturing she knew her limit and when she had gone a little too far. She clearly felt bad for bringing that one up. Jim Hopper had already gotten enough heat from Mayor Kline while the investigation had been fresh and ongoing.

Some of the restless parents of the victims as well as the frightened public that couldn't move on still called from time to time questioning him about how he did things. Why he had never been able to solve those cases nor catch the one responsible. Trying to make him answer for the fact that their daughters would never be coming home to them. Those calls had been brutal as had the picketing in front of the station almost every morning and every evening.

The guilt and frustration over it sat heavy with him everyday, a true painful burden on his very soul. His team could run and chase but never seemed to be in the right place at the right time to find the right one to run after. For some reason he had all the run ins himself but he had trouble keeping up and often found himself unable to follow fast enough on his feet to capture the sadistic bastard. He indeed was feeling very unfit, as if he were not good enough to protect Hawkins and the townspeople he knew personally and cared about, more efficiently.

Hopper knew Flo was right but it still hurt his pride and his heart to know that he had been close to closing in on the suspect, yet each time he almost apprehended the suspect they had evaded him. Whoever it was had been faster, stronger, maybe even younger? He never got a good look at their face or body because it had been at night and in the middle of a dark isolated place. Just his luck that it couldn't have happened in the daytime or out in the open.

He had tried for years to figure out where the suspect would have held the missing girls, if they were still in fact alive, and tried to map out locations. Checking those areas never yielded any results.

Before this all began just three years ago, nothing like this had ever happened here. To say the townspeople, himself, and his department were shocked was a gross understatement. It was an evil unlike anything they had ever known before. Something they never had to try to comprehend and it rocked the very foundations of their small

quiet town. It had successfully struck fear in the hearts of many where before none was harbored and it felt as though it would taint them and their simple lives forever.

"I know. Believe me, I hate myself every day for it. I've never forgotten. I recall every one of those girl's faces and it's haunted me even in my sleep. I don't get much of that anymore."

He was trying to move on. They all were. She frowned at him and walked over to put a comforting hand on his shoulder resting it there. They stayed still like that for a few moments.

"I know, Jim. I know. I'm sorry." She said softly.

He looked down for a few seconds but then looked back up to her smiling to try and let her know he was okay. Then he looked as if he was about to begin pleading for her to let him have his usual... a delectable treat coated with a boatload of sugar to get him through his day.

"Please, let me just have one donut. Just one?"

She began to walk away laughing softly as a response but he stopped her once more begging her to at least fix him her terrible coffee with overkill on the creamer and sugar to help him drink it down.

"Come on, Florence, give me a break? Here, I'm eating the apple, see? Mmmmm. Delicious. Coffee now, please, and one donut at least. Three creamers and at least eight packets of sugar. I need a boost today badly."

He took a bite of it and chewed swallowing audibly to drive his point home. She sighed and nodded finally giving into him, partly because she felt bad for bringing up the failed cases he had tried so hard to crack.

When the F.B.I. came in to take over he had really felt miserable and out of his element as if he could no longer hack it or didn't deserve the title of Police Chief of Hawkins. But she knew he did and that his heart was in the right place possessing the right stuff to protect this town. She couldn't keep him on a sugarless diet for long as he

normally consumed a lot of it when slightly depressed. She knew it was pointless to try anyways as he would wind up getting it eventually behind her back.

"Coming right up, Chief. THREE sugars." She snuck in there slyly at the last second before disappearing to go get his much requested fix to help him get his day started.

He groaned at her craftily cutting his intake practically in half while leaving his presence. When she was gone he grinned at getting his way over the donut and then looked at the apple. He was looking all around to make sure she wouldn't somehow see as she always managed to have her eyes everywhere in this building and it simply baffled him how she did it.

Once he was sure she wouldn't see him dispose of it, he chucked the partially eaten apple into his waste basket burying it under other garbage and kicked his feet up on his desk playing with one of his desk toys absentmindedly. Usually each day was laid back with a minimum amount of call ins and paperwork, but he was wondering what, if anything, the day would bring him and if it would be anything interesting at all.

He lit up a smoke feeling somewhat bored and sat back relaxing while waiting on that coffee hoping it wouldn't upset his stomach this time. Hoping against all hope that she had finally learned how to make a decent cup.

Before he could relax, his phone began ringing off the hook. He grumbled and picked it up rather upset that he would already have to deal with a call before he even had his morning cup of joe. It was Eugene, a crotchety old man who had a farm a few miles out from the city in the middle of practically nowhere.

Eugene was very well known for growing the largest field of pumpkins for Halloween, the season now long passed, and also supplied the town and other neighboring counties with the most squash, potatoes, and corn. He was old but very experienced and had a true farmer's hand when it came to tending to his crops. His only other true rival, despite the number of farmers in the area, was Merrill who was another old hand farmer just as grumpy as him if



not worse. Their antics often escalated due to that rivalry and they would sometimes prank each other's farms. Nothing harmful or permanent just getting each other's goat.

Every year they went toe to toe for the annual Roane County Fairgrounds Agricultural Farm Crop Competition. Each year they tried to outdo each other even more than the last time and bicker over who's crops were the best even when neither of them won. Eugene was a pretty paranoid old geezer. Whenever his crops would fail he would often blame Merrill for sabotaging his fields despite the other farmer having no clue as to what he was talking about and mostly keeping to himself.

"Eugene, I've told you many times, more times than I'm even able to count, I am not going to humor your suspicions of Merrill messing with your fields. Now, if you will excuse me, I have much more important things to check on than to sit here and hear about the strange goings on around your farm."

He really didn't. But whatever it took to get the old nutcase off the phone and to stop calling in so much. Before he could hang up, Eugene kept him on the line trying to explain something important to him. Jim stayed on the phone putting it in between his face and shoulder nestled against his neck while fidgeting with something he took off his desk and pretending to listen to every word.

"Mhmmm. Uh huh. Yup. Hmmm. Is that so?" Eugene blathered on and on and Hopper was staring out his window not really paying attention letting the old man let it all out. It would seem he was more a therapist for some people in Hawkins rather than a Police Chief.

A few minutes later while Hopper was still held captive on the line with him, Flo walked right in with his cup of coffee in her hand and stood waiting for him to finish. She could hear Eugene's voice chattering in the background as loud as he was and she made a face while giving a soft grunt. She knew how he could be and how often he would call for the smallest and silliest of things to complain about.

"Eugene, I need you to calm down. CALM down. No. Yes, I'm listening but you don't need to shout. I can hear you just fine, unlike you I'm not deaf. Uh huh. I was just there last month. There's

nothing. It's probably just some punk kids messing around in your fields again like last year. Yes, I know. No, I don't think Merrill had anything to do with this. Look, we've been through this. I already came out and I chased the kid off whoever they were. Most likely some burnout teenager getting high in your fields with nothing better to do."

The Chief sighed and pretended to strangle the phone as if he were doing it to Eugene and then put it back to his ear but not so close this time. Eugene's voice could be heard shouting out of the earpiece from clear across the room.

"It's not some goshdamn kids! I'm telling you, there is something really bad going on out here again. I got flies in overabundance in certain parts and they are eatin' up my crops and nesting in them like crazy. Might as well be damn locusts. My potatoes aren't flourishing and there's a horrible stench coming from my fields in parts I cannot seem to locate! The wind just blows it everywhere! You need to do your damn jobs and come figure this out because I've done all I can on my end to fix it!"

Florence sighed feeling bad for the Chief and rolled her eyes at all the ruckus Eugene was making.

"I'll just leave this here for you, Hop."

She placed his mug on his desk and Jim gave her a silent thank you while still listening to Eugene chew him out, a very irritated look on his face not really wanting to deal with him right now.

"Should be no reason why my crops would be failing like this or rotting out and it's just not right this time of November. I know they're good for planting in this season and I know my soil is good, I put it there myself, Jim. I work my hands to the bone! And if it's not Merrill poisoning my fields then something else fishy is going on here! This happens every year, even when I clean out the old soil and put all new fresh planting soil down in place of it."

He was right about it being odd. Every year now, for three years in a row, he had called in with this same complaint demanding that Chief Hopper and his team should come out and investigate. Almost

coincidentally it always happened around the time that the killer had struck taking their first victim, which was more than enough probable cause to look into it.

But each time they did check it out, they never found anything other than the bad crops. When they came to the farm, he and his team had combed the entire area and never found anything out of the ordinary. They had searched the entire farm field to field but other than the rotted crops in certain parts there was nothing else wrong with his farm that they could see.

Hopper couldn't help but remember how his farming troubles had started the first year of the mysterious disappearances of those girls. It had been the whole reason they had investigated his fields so much in the first place. Somehow on a hunch Jim had felt the two strange occurrences had to be connected. He had suspected the bodies of the missing girls were being buried there somewhere. To date they never found a single one of them. They had dug underneath the soil a bit in some areas of his farm fields but found nothing to suggest anything was being buried there that was causing the flies and the rot.

Without knowing the exact location to dig they most likely never would as it could even be a mile or so away in any direction. The fields were vast and the many locations where someone like that could dump a body was endless. They were at a complete loss as to why this was happening.

Just thinking about all the manpower and many months they had spent searching put his head into a spin and left him at a complete loss. The station even brought in some of the top tracking dogs using items that belonged to the girls for their scent. They even headed a search party with many of the more brave local residents. The ones that could legally and safely carry firearms. Combing the woods, Sattler's Quarry, and as many locations on the outskirts of town to try and find those missing teens, whether alive or dead, they came back empty handed every time.

The one year Hopper had caught someone sneaking around was in Eugene's fields at night while his partners were busy talking to some of the other farmers. Since he was so out of shape the trespasser took off fast getting too far ahead of him and vanished. They were

too quick and Jim had been very hefty and slow, breathless even, causing the mysterious figure to evade him. Ever since that incident, Hopper tried to lose weight and even joined a gym in town. He needed to be in better shape if he was going to be chasing down suspicious persons.

"Alright, Eugene, alright. I understand. I will send some of my guys out to check for you and do a more thorough search as much as we possibly can. Yeah. Okay, good. Mhmmm. We'll get right on it as soon as we can. Just leave Merrill out of this please and stop pestering him. If something is going on there I can guarantee you it's not any of his doing. Yup. Buh bye now. Goodbye, Eugene."

While the cantankerous old farmer was still jabbering on, Hopper finally hung up on him mid sentence slamming the phone down a little bit harder than he had intended to.

"Let me guess. Problems with the farm again?" Flo said smirking a bit.

"When isn't there? At least seventy five percent of our complaint calls come from that crazy old coot. That man needs a guard dog on his property. A good old fashioned german shepard like Jack Torey uses at his junkyard, but meaner."

He was rubbing his temples feeling a headache come on from all the yelling he had just endured.

"I'll send some men out just to make him feel better about it so he will get off our case. Thanks for the coffee."

Flo nodded and exited his office letting him recover and going back to her desk to monitor calls out in the main lobby.

Hopper looked at the coffee mug filled with the dark black liquid, an expression of trepidation all over his face. He picked the mug up and sniffed it then had a disgusted reaction to it and set it back down. All the creamer and sugar in the world couldn't make that stuff palatable enough for him to drink it. At least the coffee was hot this time and not lukewarm like it usually was when she brought it to him.

He had a brief visit with Powell and Callahan, one of which had

mocked him saying he looked like he was losing weight and patting his stomach, then snatched up a donut or two while Flo was busy on calls somewhat giving up on the whole diet thing.

After scarfing them in his office feeling satisfied, he sat there playing with a pencil while waiting for something serious to come in. He was rolling it over the bridge of his nose and then tapping it on the desk. Hopper was extremely bored by noon time with barely anything coming in that needed his specific attention.

Hours were passing and several times he took breaks walking over to the water cooler out in one of the hallways where the other officers would congregate on a slow day. He must have drank two gallons nearly using up all those little paper cups and tried each time to shoot for the waste basket after crumpling them up, sometimes missing and sometimes making it in and cheering for himself. This of course lead to multiple bathroom breaks as well due to all the water he drank.

It was just three or four more hours to go before his shift was over so he could pick up El at school when suddenly Flo burst through his door. She had apparently caught him off guard while snoozing in his chair, his legs rested up on his desk looking comfortable, and his hat covering his face. He had been snoring for good measure.

Startling him awake by tapping on his desk he jumped and tried to cover up that he wasn't sleeping by acting like he had been going through paperwork files in front of him. He sniffled wiping some slight drool from the corner of his mouth shuffling through the folders and she looked at him knowing the truth that he had passed out from lack of something to do.

"Yeah! What's up? I was just going over the uhhh... the ummm... what is it?"

He gave up on making the excuse and put the files down twitching his mustache a bit looking guilty knowing he had been caught. Florence grinned but then looked serious remembering why she had come in.

"Oh! A very important message came in for you earlier, Chief. It's

Mayor Kline. He said he really needs to speak to you and that it's extremely urgent. He sounded quite angry on the recording, just a heads up."

"And you're just getting it to me now?" Hopper exclaimed to her and she shrugged.

He almost thudded his forehead down onto his desk. Sometimes Flo was a little daft at getting the messages through to him and someone like Mayor Kline would not wait for a callback. He had to get back to him quick although he really didn't want to.

Jim absolutely hated Larry Kline. The guy was slimey, extremely shady, and most of the town even knew it. Yet he won the election three years ago since no one else really bothered to step up and rival him. This year would be his fourth and final year and he really hoped someone else would replace him in the next run. If Hopper had it his way, his close buddy Rick Hawkins would have been Mayor. He would have gladly voted for him but he didn't want to run for the position much to his despair. Anyone would have been better than Kline in his honest and informed opinion.

"What does that prancing peacock want now? He thinks everything that revolves around him and his campaigns or expensive vacations is urgent. Alright, patch him through and get him on the line for me."

He picked up his phone on his desk preparing to speak to him clearing his throat. He had to play ball with the Mayor of Hawkins despite how much he detested him.

Before Flo could even respond and do what she was asked, the perfect timing of fate intervened. Mayor Kline walked past Florence and right into his office, taking him by complete surprise, and helping himself to a chair lighting up a cigar. He blew out the smoke not caring that it was Hopper's office disrespectfully treating it like it was his own.

"Larry." Was all Hopper said as he watched him sit there, staring him down trying to keep his cool, while he made himself very comfortable.

Kline even dared to put his own feet up, expensive Italian shoes and all, right onto his desk pushing the Chief's name placard aside to make room for himself. It was a clear message that the Mayor held more power than him and was in charge calling all the shots.

"That prancing peacock is right here, Jim. In fact, what I need to discuss with you is so pressing and important that I came down in person myself just to do it face to face. Mano a mano. Ya got me?"

He waved Florence away as if she was his personal maid but she didn't budge. Hop was proud of her not jumping at the snap of his fingers like most people did.

Puffing on his cigar he had an extremely unhappy look on his face, his lips pressed in a thin hard line and his eyebrows furrowed together. He wasn't being his usual charming sleazy self with Hop as normally he was all smiles with a voice like honey to aid his manipulative nature. His voice was all business and very edgy. He was clearly pissed off about something.

"What's the matter, Larry? Got some bad press this week about your personal life?" Jim half glared half grinned. If Larry Kline was going to be here making him miserable and disrespecting him then he could dish it right back.

The Mayor made a soft grunting nose taking another pull on his rich but stinky Cuban cigar and pulled out a newspaper from inside his rather expensive looking jacket and slapped it down on the Chief's desk.

"The only one that's getting bad press right now is this whole damn police department, you included. Read your morning paper yet, Jim? I took the liberty of bringing you one. You may want to stay seated for this, it's a real whammy, Jimbo. Read it. When you're done, go out into the lobby and watch the local Hawkins News station. We have a serious problem on our hands and it needs to be dealt with. Immediately. Or I'm going to come down so hard on this place, I will have your jobs! Yours, especially, Chief!"

He practically shouted those last two sentences so loud it potentially echoed off the walls of Jim's small office. He could see through the

blinds other officers practically looking in their direction most likely having heard the commotion.

Flo stood stoic in front of his office door not wanting to leave him alone with this man not liking him one bit or how he treated her police Chief. She was eying Kline with a cold look while crossing her arms in front of her chest.

Mayor Kline looked very upset and was taking several aggressive puffs on his cigar now in between glowering at Hopper. Removing his feet from Jim's desk he got up from the chair and paced his office with his hands behind his back and then went to the window behind where Hopper sat looking out from between the blinds giving him some time to read the headlines. Jim read it out loud slowly.

"Hawkins Police Department no longer trustworthy. Years of a cyclical ongoing familiar and terrifying crime spree continues unsolved as missing teen is recently abducted and reported missing by family. The Hawkins P.D.'s methods and attention to detail seem to be slipping. They have posted no solid leads for the case in three years time nor have they captured the criminal responsible for the missing girls."

Hopper looked crushed at the blatant disdain for him and his department written in black and white and was getting even more upset the more he read. He continued on getting a nasty surprise.

"The townspeople spoke out during assembly at a Hawkins City Hall meeting held by Mayor Kline Saturday evening and the vast majority present had stated no longer feel safe. Police Chief Jim Hopper and his team are clearly incapable of keeping Hawkins a safe and caring community any longer?! Mayor Kline has stated he would communicate with the Hawkins P.D. and work together with them closely in order to help capture the one responsible for the abductions. Hopefully with his presence in the station, the investigation will be a success."

After scanning over it, his eyes got wide and his temper was flaring now. He tossed the paper onto his desk and sat back in his chair groaning and rubbing his temples once more. If he didn't have much of a headache from earlier he could feel the full force of one coming



on now.

"You held a City Council meeting without me and my men present? What the hell is wrong with you? You should have told me so we could have come down and been a part of it! We want to protect these people and speak to them openly and you go behind our backs and treat us like we're all a bunch of children behind these desks."

Mayor Kline snorted at that. That was clearly just how he thought of them. The hotshot thought he had all the answers as if he had worked as a policeman or chief himself his whole life. His pomp was showing and it enraged Hopper further. He almost wanted to shout for him to get the hell out of his office.

How could Kline badmouth the Hawkins P.D. in a City Hall meeting and act as if they needed him present just so they could do their jobs right? How could he not at least try to stand up for all of them and calm the citizens down? He was the Mayor for God sakes, that was HIS job, and he wasn't doing it obviously.

"Would it have made a difference? Clearly the people wanted to come to me to make this right and not you and your men. Obviously you all need handholding in this so I'm here to ensure it's done right. It would look pretty bad if Hawkin's own mayor didn't do anything and then ran for the next four years, wouldn't it?"

That's truly what this was all about. All he cared about were the people's votes and securing his place in next year's election. He didn't give a shit about the townspeople at all. He was all lights and show when Hopper had been out on the streets in dangerous locations trying to find the one responsible for disrupting the lives of the very people who were spitting on him and his team now.

Hop and his officers had always done their jobs protecting and serving and going above and beyond to make sure everyone felt safe. He knew this creep taking girls was their one big failure and could even understand the outcry of the residents because of their fear. But for the townsfolk to say something so hurtful about their own officers who had done so much for this town was just shameful and it boiled his blood. For the very newspapers to cast them in such an ugly, pathetic, and useless light was going above and beyond.

How had they not been notified of the newly missing girl before the papers, reporters, and newstations knew all about it? Had they really slipped that bad that the townspeople no longer trusted coming to them first to report the missing? Had this girl's parents really felt so ashamed of their own local officers that they felt the need to go to the press and news stations first before even filing a missing person's report with them? Because that's what it would seem had exactly happened.

The people were losing their faith in Hopper and his officers. Losing their trust in them because of this sick monster getting away with what they were doing each year. It had finally taken it's toll, and despite hating Mayor Kline and his attitude about it, they were right.

Hawkins P.D. were slipping and needed to get their edge back. They needed to kick things in high gear and prove to the town once more that they could protect and serve them without fail. This criminal needed to be caught and put behind bars and girls needed to stop going missing and whole families needed to stop being ripped apart.

Florence herself looked sad and concerned but left the room giving them some privacy to discuss the matter more deeply. She went out into the lobby to turn on the television to the news channel ahead of time to check it out herself. Her heart sank as she scanned through the channels pressing the buttons on the old T.V. set to get to the news station.

When the news reporter began speaking she clutched her chest over her heart and gasped while officers Powell, Callahan, and a few others came to crowd around the small television set with her and looked at one another then back to the screen. Some shook their heads. Others covered their mouths with their hands. A few of them actually had tears welling up in their eyes. It was all over the news, actually, on every news channel.

Mayor Kline walked over to Hoppers desk getting really close and leaned down at him, the cigar smoke and smell irritating Jim as he put down the paper.

"Deal with this. You and your men. Do not repeat what happened the last few years. I want this little problem solved or it's not only your

ass on the line, it's mine as well."

Chief Hopper glared at him but all he could do was nod. He knew he was right, despite him being a complete asshole about it. This needed to end.

Getting up out of his own chair he pushed past the Mayor and left him in his office walking out into the front room. He saw his team all huddled around the television. The screen flashed with the words "breaking news" and looked very important. A young blonde newscaster was at her desk and talking about the urgent headlines for today.

"Hello, Hawkins, you are tuned into CBS News Channel 4. In a tragic story we bring you today, a young girl around the age of seventeen from Hawkins High School by the name of Victoria Fitzgerald, went missing last weekend. Her last known whereabouts were stated to be the Starcourt Mall where she was last seen by some friends walking away and alone at night."

The news channel cut to her parents standing in front of their home and talking to a reporter and into a mic.

"We just want our baby home. Please... if anyone has seen her, please let us know. Anything helps to bring our sweet Victoria back home. My babygirl..."

The mother, Mrs Fitzgerald, held up a picture of their daughter along with their contact information and was crying into Mr Fitzgerald's shoulder with a heartwrenching sob. The reporters cut away the camera due to the father waving his hands for them to go away and to stop filming them in their moment of grief.

"No more information has been gathered yet but the local authorities will most likely be investigating shortly. Hopefully some new evidence and information on her will turn up soon. We have a picture of her up on the screen along with numbers to contact in case she is spotted. We ask all of you to keep an eye out for Victoria and to help give us leads. If anyone happens to see this missing girl please make sure to contact your local Hawkins Police Department and CBS News Channel 4 with any information you may have if you have seen her.

Thank you, now back to Ron Whitman with the weather for today."

As soon as it switched to the weather forecast, Flo turned off the television and turned to see Hopper standing there behind her. He had also been watching. He had a grim look on his face and looked very upset. Today of all days, the sick psychopath was starting in and hunting again. One victim down. How many more would be taken before they might be able to catch the monstrous cold blooded killer?

"Mother of God, Hop. He's back. It's starting again." Was all Flo said when they locked eyes with each other. Hopper nodded to her and she sat down at her desk completely beside herself playing with her necklace and looking hopeless and sad for the girl and her parents.

Mayor Kline walked out of Jim's office having most likely put out his cigar in the ashtray on his desk.

"Time is ticking, Jim. I want this bastard and I want him stopped. This is a PR nightmare for me and if you don't get this under control, the F.B.I. will most likely come in again and take over. If you don't put someone guilty behind bars for this and control the public outcry, it'll be the last thing you do in this town as Chief of Police in Hawkins."

He stormed out of the department and got in his fancy car taking off angrily from the lot. Hopper thought for a few seconds and immediately sprung into action forming a game plan.

"Powell, go to Eugene's and check his fields again. Take some able bodied officers with you. I want it combed again for anything unusual. We've had three cases of his farm and crops going weird whenever this killer was on the loose. Callahan, I want you and some officers to go around town setting up a mandated curfew. All shops, all places of business, even the Starcourt Mall. I don't care how they whine and complain, get it done. Curfew is now set for five at dusk. No exceptions. I want all employees, families, children, indoors and safe at home with this curfew restriction. If anyone fights it, you make them go home and escort them yourself if needed."

"Yes, Chief. Right away." Powell and Callahan started to gather up people to carry out the task that Hopper ordered them to complete.

They got a move on and exited the station all going to their vehicles outside. Some were riding together while others rode separate in their own vehicles.

"Flo, I need you to keep monitoring the phone lines. If ANYTHING comes up about this Victoria girl, any information or leads or whatever it is, you contact me by radio as soon as it comes in and I'll come back to the station or check out the location you tell me to go. Keep your ears on and keep an eye on the station for me. Contact the girls parents. I want to talk to them later in the station here. I also want to talk to the friends who saw her last for a small interrogation. I need to start bringing in people that knew her. Friends, family, teachers, the whole nine yards. I especially want to know if she had any enemies, any jealous girls from school, a boyfriend or ex boyfriends, anything they can possibly tell me about her."

"We're going to be slammed now. Granted it's usually slow and peaceful here but with this going on other things are going to pile up with it eventually."

Florence said sighing and shaking her head worrying about what was to come now because of this. Hopper thought on this for a minute. She had a point. They would need a little bit of backup from some other stations.

"Call in some extra officers from different local nearby counties. Ask them for anyone they can spare because with this going on we just might get a little backed up. You're right, Flo, but don't let that go to your head."

She gave a light laugh and he was glad he could cheer her up at least a little bit with humor.

"We'll handle the smaller cases as they come up but this will be our main focal point right now. All other things are secondary to this but we can handle the influx with extra officers on duty out here."

"You can count on me, Chief."

Florence saluted him with much heart and got right to it getting the filed paperwork out for the numbers and information needed to begin

making the necessary calls around town for him.

"Now, I need to make a few housecalls of my own. I'll be visiting the parents of Victoria Fitzgerald. I will gently question them but also offer my support to them as best as I can and keep them calm. Get me their address and phone number first. Then I need to make a stop at the Hawkin's residence. I need to talk to Rick and Katherine and make sure they are safe too. No doubt they've already seen the news broadcast but I still want to check in on them."

Hop put his hands on his hips and shook his head. He was still in shock but he should have known the Hawkins Killer would return. He was stupid and naive to think it was finally over. He thought of all the kids and teens coming in and out of the local schools. He thought of Jane. If anything ever happened to her... he would completely lose it. He could not let anything bad happen to her, at all costs.

"I will join the rest of the group once all my other tasks are done and help lay down the curfew around town. I will be making damn sure everyone knows this is mandatory, not a drill, and non negotiable. After that I will start my interrogations and go over the old case files in my office. I need connections and to try and find some leads and new information if possible. Please have those files ready for me for when I return."

"I will. I know where they all are just in case we ever needed them." She confirmed dutifully.

"You're a lifesaver. I knew I kept you around as my secretary for more than just your... coffee making skills."

Flo snorted at that one knowing when she was being buttered up but smiled at him all the same.

"I also need to stop by the Hawkins High and Hawkins Middle schools and catch them up to speed on everything while also giving them a game plan for this. Give them a rundown on how to approach parents about their children's safety and about keeping a close watch on the students. I will also need to check on Jane. She will have to stick close to me until all of this is over with, whether we catch the one responsible or not."

"But Hop, her and her friends..."

"They will just have to deal. It's not safe right now for her to be going out on weekends with them anymore. I know she doesn't fit the killer-kidnapper's M.O. but I can't risk it. I didn't last year and I won't this year either. Those kids need to get rides home to and from school. They need to be picked up and brought straight home and that's exactly what Jane will be getting from me. No ifs ands or buts."

"Of course, Chief. I agree, that is the best course of action. Poor things."

She sighed feeling bad that kids couldn't seem to be kids anymore in Hawkins whenever this psychotic monster was prowling the streets and causing such distress and fear in everyone the whole town over.

"Alright, Flo, you know what to do. I have a lot I have to get done now."

She nodded and was taking down notes of what he wanted her to do as he spoke and checking the file cabinets for the numbers and addresses he would need and that she would have to call and make contact with. She paused what she was doing to say one last thing to him.

"Catch that monster, Hop." She said looking him in the eyes, hers were full of emotions he easily understood that matched his own, as she gazed at him while picking up the phone.

"I'm going to to my damndest, Flo. Mark my words. This sick sonofabitch won't get another year of doing this, I'm going to see to that."

With that he went back into his office and grabbed his hat and jacket off the rack and made his way out to his cruiser. He gave a heavy sigh, his heart weighted down by all of this starting all over again right here in Hawkins.

By now, he should know that this sick bastard wasn't going to stop. Had never stopped. Each year like clockwork they were claiming and collecting more girl's lives and it should have been expected.

Each year they had hoped the town could bury it and forget. Mourn and recover. Move on and not have a repeat of the same tragic cycle. But each year this murderer just kept coming back. He had to put an end to it once and for all or he could never live with himself.

Time was indeed ticking by with not a moment to waste and he wasn't going to just sit around while the body count of the missing would begin climbing higher and higher. He had to act now while the window of the abductions was open and especially before it would close. That would happen once the suspect felt they got enough victims to satiate themselves for the new year.

Victoria Fitzgerald fit the bill perfectly. Red hair, loner type, highschool age. Every single one of those girls shared the same traits, including Barbera Holland and many others.

He would make sure the high school and middle school held assembly to discuss how to stay safe and to not walk home after school alone, especially after the curfew. He would do whatever it took to keep those kids safe.

Getting into his cruiser his first stop would be Victoria's parents house. Flo spoke to him over his walkie giving him the address and he put on his siren and his lights speeding through traffic that moved aside for him to make a beeline to their residence as fast as possible.

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(TO BE CONTINUED...)